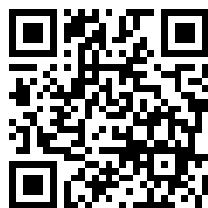

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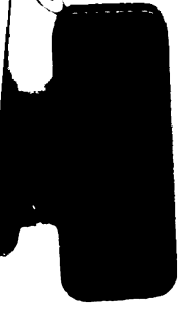
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Bishop of Cleveland

Cleveland, Ohio.

MARCH 9, 1900



THE BIBLE AND RATIONALISM OR ANSWER TO DIFFICULTIES IN THE BOOKS OF MOSES

By REV. JOHN THEIN

*Author of "Christian Anthropology," "Answer to
Difficulties of the Bible,"* "Catechism of Rodez,"
and "Ecclesiastical Dictionary," : : : : :*



** The present work, under a different title, forms Part First of a new edition
of "Answer to Difficulties of the Bible," completely revised and greatly enlarged.*

PART I.

THE WORK WILL COMPRISE FOUR VOLUMES; EACH VOLUME
FORMS A WHOLE BY ITSELF AND SELLS SEPARATELY. . . .

B. HERDER
BOOKSELLER AND PUBLISHER
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1901

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INTRODUCTION

THE Bible has had enemies in all ages. From the time the pagans became aware of the inspired Hebraic book they insulted it. Even before the Apostles had commenced to preach Christianity, Apion, the Grammarian, mocked it in Egypt, and an unknown painter caricatured it at Pompeii. We might say that a subtle intuition admonished the adorers of false gods, that in the pages of this sacred work lay hidden the force which would annihilate their idols and overthrow their altars. When Christ's religion achieved its first victories, the attacks were redoubled with increased wrath. Since that time the war against the revealed Word has never ceased to spread and expand. Infidels, heretics, schismatics, unbelievers of all kinds, hurl themselves in turn upon our sacred books. To-day the warfare has attained its acutest stage and the number of the enemies of our faith is myriad. The Bible condemns all evil passions,—all the passions have united themselves against it.

However, if those who outrage and assail holy Scripture are numerous, those who venerate it are still more numerous. The Lord has reserved, in the midst of those who pledge allegiance to the rule of infidelity, legions of believers who always adore their Creator and Master, and who respectfully acknowledge, in our Sacred Scriptures, the very Word of God, as their fathers have done.

But whence comes this diversity of beliefs? Whence originates the cause of the faith of the one side and of the infidelity of the other? How can the same book be, for the former, a divine book expounding divine truth, and, for the latter, a work of purely human production? Is the intelligence of men so widely variant that the same depositary may contain the truth for a Leibnitz and Bossuet, and error for a Strauss and Wellhausen? The sun enlightens all eyes. Why does not the Bible enlighten all minds?

The reasons for this phenomenon are various and complicated. The one contingent is recruited from the narrow powers of the mind,

the other from the rich resources of the soul. We need not inquire here into the moral causes of infidelity and the moral responsibility of those who are attacked with this (alas! so common) disease to-day. Let it suffice to remark in passing that there are the blind who cannot see the brightest light. There are men who seem to be devoid of the sense of the supernatural, so to speak, as there are some who are devoid of moral sense; and whose intelligence, enfeebled by a species of paralysis, can absorb no truth and becomes the prey of doubt in all the channels of human knowledge. The causes of skepticism engendered toward the Sacred Books are analogous to those of philosophical skepticism in general. Infidels are persuaded they discover some blemishes in the Bible; these minute specks hide from their eyes the whole beauty of its divine character. They perceive obscurities, and conclude that the Scripture is like all other human works and purely human itself. The believer does not deny that Holy Scripture contains difficult passages, divergences, even alterations,—the fruit of the ravages of time. But he seeks to illuminate these spots which have been darkened in the course of a long voyage across the ages,—he does not endeavor to transform a vermicule into an elephant, nor a grain of sand into a mountain, and he continues to believe in revelation, in spite of the objections of infidels, as mankind continues to believe in reason and in the perceptions of the senses, in spite of the difficulties of Sensualists and Idealists.

SOME CAUSES OF THE DIFFICULTIES FOUND IN THE BIBLE.

The Church teaches that Holy Scripture is a book inspired by God, that is, composed under the influence of the Holy Ghost, in such a manner that it emancipated from all error the one He thus empowered to be His interpreter to man. God did not dictate to the prophet the exact language which he should employ in the process of his general teaching, but left him the free use of his natural faculties, so that the peculiar character of each writer, his style, and manner, reveals itself in his work. Holy Scripture contains nothing but truth revealed for us. But the Holy Ghost did not impart in a supernatural manner to the human instruments of which He made use what they already knew through natural means, either by their personal experience or by the testimony of other

men. He taught them by miraculous means only what they could not know of themselves, as, for instance, the secrets of the future. Moreover, it does not matter whether such or such a part of the Sacred Books has been directly revealed to its author or simply inspired. All that they contain is equally true and certain, for, as Catholic theologians teach, the divine inspiration guarded the sacred writer against all error,—not only against all dogmatic and moral, —but also against all historical or scientific error.

The Bible, therefore, has gone forth from the hands of God pure and spotless, worthy of its Author, and obliging human veneration and belief. However, Providence did not judge it proper to fully protect it against the lesser and inconsequential injuries of time, and has subjected it, in a limited measure, to the conditions of human things. Providence has watched over the Sacred Book to preserve it intact as to its foundation, and that the sacred depositary of revelation may be transmitted without grave alterations to the remotest generations, but has not deemed it necessary to perform continual miracles to shelter it from those slight errors and insignificant changes which insensibly enter into all the works of men. The rust of centuries has thus deposited its imprint upon some of the pages of our Sacred Scriptures, and we have no longer a text absolutely conformable to the autographs of the sacred writers. Passing under the pen of thousands of transcribers, in an interval of time extending over from eighteen hundred to thirty-four hundred years, proper names have been disfigured, figures changed, words omitted, various passages shifted, obscured, or slightly altered. A comparison with the most ancient texts and versions furnishes a clear proof of this. The actual Hebrew text, for instance, attributes to Lamech, father of Noe, 777 years (Gen. v. 31); the Samaritan text, 653; the Greek version of the Septuagint, 753. It is evident that two of these texts, if not all three of them, have been changed by the copyists. We read in the Paralipomena (II. Par. xvi. 1) that Baasa, King of Israel, made war on Juda in the 36th year of the reign of Asa. Baasa reigned only to the 26th year of Asa (III. Ki. xvi. 8). The Septuagint aggravates the difficulty by placing the war in the year 38 of Asa's reign. Not only is there a contradiction between the Greek and the Hebrew, but there is an evident fault in one of the two passages of the Hebrew text. Probably we ought to read 26 instead of 36 or 38. Our actual text (II. Ki. xxi. 8), attributes five

children to Michol, daughter of Saul, and, nevertheless, we are formally told in another passage of the Second Book of Kings (vi. 23), that Michol never had any children. Here we should read, no doubt, instead of her name, that of another daughter of Saul, Merob, as is conveyed by the word *heri* in the version corrected by the Massorets, and as appears from what is said in the First Book of Kings (xviii. 19). In the time of St. Jerome there existed so many variances in the copies which circulated among the Faithful, that this Father wrote to Pope St. Damasus: "There are almost as many divergent copies as there are manuscripts."

It is hard for those who have never had any experience in dealing with the manuscripts of books to understand how difficult, nay, almost impossible, it was in former times to preserve the text from all change. The books published in modern times are entrusted to the printer, the proof sheets are carefully revised by the author, and allowed to be printed only when the latter is satisfied with the corrections which he has indicated therein. The work is then issued, and no matter how multitudinous the number of copies, as a product of mechanical labor, they are all alike; they vary neither by a word, nor by a letter, nor by a comma. And indeed this multitude of copies are as exactly alike as though they were the first original work of the author's pen.

For the ancients, on the contrary, there were as many varying copies as there were reproductions of the same work. The author read his work to the copyists,—each copyist produced a *codex*; but, with different readings, errors necessarily unavoidable, were incorporated into the transcription of a large work. All writers of books know how often the printers, by some remissness in their manual occupation, alter the meaning by mistaking one word for another, by omissions, additions, and other inaccuracies resulting from lack of attention. The *librarii* of ancient times were not more perfect than the typographical artisan of our day; but their shortcomings entailed more grievous consequences, because the authors could not correct all the copies which were made of their books. They apprehended the grave results of this technical inaccuracy, which they could foresee only too plainly, and they abjured the scribes, with the most earnest solicitations, not to neglect to compare their copy with the original manuscript. "I conjure thee," wrote St. Irenæus, at the end of his book against the Valentinians, "I conjure thee,

whoever thou mayest be that transcribest this book, by Our Lord Jesus Christ and by His glorious coming, when He will come to judge the living and the dead, to realize what thou hast written, and carefully correct it after the copy from which thou hast transcribed it. I pray thee also to transcribe this conjuration and put it at the end of thy copy." (See Eusebius, *Church History*, v. 20.)

Hence we need not be astonished that, from the first centuries, both the Greek and Latin Fathers complained so often about the corruption of the manuscripts of the Bible.

This is, however, not the only source of embarrassment for the defender of the Bible. Even had the text been preserved to us in its original integrity, and entirely free from any technical changes, it would still present other and graver difficulties, as, for instance, those of interpretation. God, in communicating with man, had to make use of the language of man. Now, all human language is imperfect. It is composed of words, and these words are signs, the invariably incomplete pictures of the realities and ideas they attempt to portray. Words show us only one side of the realities; they can never succeed in giving us the complete description of the object or idea in all its phases. In this respect, also, the Semitic languages are still more imperfect than the Aryan languages. They have not been developed, elaborated, polished, modified, and brought to the degree of perfection which the idioms of the son of Japhet have attained. The Hebrew vocabulary is very limited. Very often there is only a single word to express many diverse ideas. Thus the Israelite was often obliged to have recourse to the periphrase, and, as a result of this circumlocution, it was frequently impossible for him to express his thought with a rigorous exactitude.

In keeping with the vocabulary, the Hebrew syntax is also of a primitive simplicity. The particles which conjoin the grammatical sections of the discourse are very rare. The phrases join themselves without any articulation and co-ordination of the various parts. There is no punctuation. The thoughts are marked out and dissected, and the phrases used in expressing them juxtaposed rather than joined and united.

What still further increases the obscurity, is that the Old Testament was written in a language which ceased to be spoken many centuries ago. It is only too true, Hebrew is for us a "dead language." Languages are, so to speak, illustrations and representa-

tions of the peoples who used them. They abound in allusions to their customs, habits, modes of thought, and manner of living. If, therefore, inquiry be directed toward a nation which has disappeared from the arena of the world for an extended period of time, and whose customs were different from those with which we are familiar by our personal experience or practice, it is a matter of great difficulty for us to form an exact idea of them. If we are hindered at every step, even when reading the ancient authors of the same race as ourselves, although they composed their works in a language from which our own is derived, and although they lived on the same soil, possessed institutions and customs analogous to those with which we are familiar and which we have in great part inherited, how much greater must be the difficulty encountered, if the ancient writers whose works we would peruse not only wrote in a language whose genus is different from ours, but who had also a totally different method of mental conception and habits of thought; who led a life so far removed from ours, both in point of time and conditions of existence, and who must have employed their words and expressions in a sense very dissimilar from what is familiar to us in their present usage. A judge in Israel had nothing in common with the judges of our civil or criminal courts, and the temple of Jerusalem did not resemble our Christian temples. How many readers of the Bible are there, however, that take into account these essential differences!

Besides the words of an equivocal or ambiguous meaning, there are those of an unknown meaning. We might say that the term "dead" applies with even greater descriptive force to the Hebrew language than to the so-called classic languages, for we have a far more limited number of monuments of the Hebrew language than of the Greek and Latin, and, consequently, less means of understanding it. All that has survived of Hebrew literature is contained in one small volume. In this volume a great number of expressions occur but once, and, consequently, their meaning is uncertain. This is the case, sometimes in the most important passages. Particularly in the prophecies do we meet with those rare and unique words, whose meaning is only partly made known to us by the ancient versions or through comparison with other Semitic idioms. But these versions do not always agree one with the other, and the congeneric idioms do not elucidate all the obscurities.

Therefore, a vast field remains open for hypotheses, uncertainties, discussions, and the arbitrary assumptions of infidels and skeptics.

These are some of the many causes which make it hard to understand the books written by the Hebrews. The manner of Oriental composition also aggravates the difficulty. No Hebrew Aristotle schooled these writers in the rules of poetry, nor had they a Cicero to crystallize the laws of rhetoric. Their literary art, if such it may be called, is obscure and bears no resemblance to ours. They follow paths that are unknown to us and wherein the Occidental reader oftentimes becomes bewildered. Devoid of a philosophic tongue, restricted to the resources of a meagre vocabulary, little accustomed to analysis and synthesis, they express their thought exactly as the thought presents itself to their minds. They relate their facts as they remember them. They take small pains about the logic of events, nor do they seek to be particularly clear, placing each fact in its proper place and sequence, and diligently omitting nothing useful. This volume is a rich treasure house, filled with pearls and precious stones, but sadly lacking in precise order and methodical arrangement.

To all these causes for obscurity and difficulty is added yet another one for the majority of Bible readers, namely: they are unacquainted with the original text, and can only derive their knowledge of it through a translation. Now, no matter how excellent any translation may be, it can never render the true meaning of the original work in its perfection. All the critics acknowledge the eminent merit of the version of the Septuagint, and especially of our Vulgate; but all are also obliged to acknowledge that, in these versions, certain passages are not rendered in an irreproachable manner. There is a considerable number of these faulty passages in the Septuagint, but a smaller number in our Vulgate; nevertheless, the latter is not free from these faulty renditions which often convey an opposite meaning from that which was intended by the original. Fortunately, the original text provides the correction for the errors of translations. But the original text for all the books of the Bible is not now extant; and where it is wanting, as for Tobias, Judith, and some others, it is sometimes impossible to restore with any degree of certainty the primitive reading, and, consequently, to solve the difficulty.

Independently of the difficulties of language and alterations of the text, there is another cause which besets with impediments and obscurity the work of the Bible student, namely, our ignorance of antiquity. The events of Sacred History transpired in very remote epochs, in times and places little known to us. When the objects of our investigation are at a great distance from us, they appear to us as though enveloped in a fog, and become confused and indistinct. We cannot abruptly seize the surroundings and distinguish certain characteristics. Not only are we oblivious of many facts that are indispensable to an exact knowledge of persons and things, and the proper appreciation of their actions, but our political, social, and even religious organization, our wants, relations, manner of living, and surroundings, in a word, our status as human beings, are so different that, in spite of all the efforts of our imagination, we are unable to reanimate those ancient societies, and see them as they were in reality. The lapse of thousands of years has transported us into a different atmosphere. How many obscure, unintelligible points, which we judge too easily as incredible, were natural and clear as daylight for the contemporaries of those past ages!

Finally, a last and often most serious source of difficulty in properly understanding the Bible, are the explanations which exegetists themselves have given thereof, and which have changed the meaning. The commentaries which these latter have written on Sacred Scripture are so numerous that they could well fill several large libraries. In this mass of books, in spite of the uprightness of the intentions of their authors, in spite of their perspicacity and their science, there is many an error and many a falsehood. Nevertheless, through a convergence of dissimilar circumstances, we accept certain interpretations as well founded, and impute crime to the Bible when it is only the commentators who are at fault. Thus we reproach the Scripture with teaching, contrarily to astronomy, that the earth is immovable and that the sun turns round the earth. This is wrong; the sacred text does not teach this error. The ancient interpreters, it is true, thus understood the words of Josue to the sun: "Move not, O sun" (Jos. x. 12), but they were deceived. They mistook a popular expression for the expression of a scientific dogma, and we can apply to them the words of St. Augustine: "*Interpres erravit*" (*Contra Faustum*, xi. 5).

Thus, ignorance of facts and surroundings; the unavoidable imperfection of translations; loss of the original text of several of the Sacred Books; peculiar characteristics of the Hebrew tongue; inherent impotency of human language in general to render all the shades of thought and meaning and to reproduce a complete representation of the facts; the errors of the copyists,—result of their false reading, of their negligence or distractions,—and, finally, the errors of interpreters and commentators concur in producing the majority of the apparent or real difficulties in the study of Holy Scripture, and which give rise to numerous objections on the part of its enemies.

2



PRELIMINARY CHAPTER

AUTHENTICITY OF THE PENTATEUCH



THE first book of the Old Testament is the Pentateuch. Of all the inspired writings, since Celsus and Julian the Apostate, this has been the most often the target for the enemies of faith.

In our time, they even go so far as to contest its rank; they deny its authenticity, antiquity, and veracity. There is not one single chapter, almost not one single verse, against which they did not raise some doubts or objections of all kinds. Hence we shall establish, first, its Mosaic origin; then we shall answer the objections in detail, in order to justify this Sacred Book against all the false accusations of which it has been the object.

The question of authenticity, that is, of the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch, is a capital question. It is, so to say, the foundation upon which rests the whole biblical structure and consequently both the Jewish and Christian religions. If the history of the departure of the Israelites was written in the very period when this great event took place, and by the chief actor, then its testimony cannot be controverted, and bad faith alone can call into doubt the veracity of the facts of Exodus. If, on the contrary, it was drawn up several centuries afterwards, those who deny the inspiration of Holy Scripture can contest its authenticity and veracity in the name of criticism, and consider as myths the great events and miracles which brought about the deliverance of the Hebrews from the Egyptian yoke. Moreover, they have the right to claim that the Pentateuch does not present the religious, intellectual, and moral state of the contemporaries of Moses, but that of a later epoch, when civilization had progressed, when religion had become more perfect, and when legislation had more or less formed itself.

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In this case the Mosaic law might not be the fruit of revelation, but of the natural progress of the human mind. Thus the supernatural character of religion and of the Hebrew institutions would be greatly altered, or rather destroyed, and although the theologian may always be armed to defend the first books of the Old Testament in the name of faith, the critic is this no longer against infidelity which rejects, on the one hand, the decisions of the Church, and refuses, on the other, the authority of a history written a long time after the events it relates, and the testimonies which it is impossible to check and verify. Thus, aside from the authority of the Church, the divine origin of the Jewish Law, the vocation of the chosen people, the primitive revelation,—in one word, all the great facts which are the basis of Christianity,—become suspicious and doubtful.

The importance of the question of the authenticity of the Pentateuch explains to us the rage with which infidels continually return to the attack on the traditional belief. They desire to overthrow this strong wall in order to enter the heart of the place, for they know very well that all their efforts against religion will be in vain as long as they have not destroyed the fortress which defends it. Under the appearance of a literary question, the principle of religion is at stake. The question is not so much who is the author and what is the date of the book, as how to destroy or defend the existence of the supernatural and of revelation. The question of the origin of the Pentateuch has become the very question of revealed religion. In our time the debate on the Gospels and Epistles is put in the background, and critics occupy themselves especially with the inquiry as to what epoch the Books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, in order to prove that the laws which they contain are not derived from Moses, but are the natural outgrowth of the development of the national life of Israel; whence it would result that there is no Mosaic revelation.

Therefore, we have to establish, in the first place, the authenticity of the Pentateuch, that is, that it was written in the time of the Exodus, as tradition, both the Jewish and Christian, has always believed and taught. Let us remark, however, that we do not need to maintain, and will not maintain, that the work of Moses has reached us in its absolute integrity, without any change, addition,

alteration, or comment. More or less slight modifications, made here and there, in the course of time, to this ancient history, either to complete it or to make it better understood, or to polish its language, do not prevent the whole from dating from the epoch of the departure from Egypt. The most severe critics unhesitatingly admit changes in regard to figures, places, and names, the addition of the account about the death of Moses at the end of Deuteronomy, etc.

Hence, we have to defend the authenticity of the Pentateuch only as to its substance, without occupying ourselves with minor details which criticism might suspect of being interpolated or modified.

The Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch being thus understood, we shall establish it by calling attention, first, to the testimonies by which it is supported, and secondly, by exposing the arguments drawn from the study of its contents.

CHAPTER I

MOSAIC ORIGIN OF THE PENTATEUCH

EXTRINSIC PROOFS OF THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE PENTATEUCH

1. *Testimonies of Christ and of His Apostles.*—Christian tradition has always been unanimous in attributing to Moses the composition of the Pentateuch. The Fathers, Doctors, Catholic interpreters and commentators have never differed as to this point, and the Council of Trent has been the faithful echo of the belief of the Church in naming Moses, in the Canon of the Scriptures, as the author of the first five books of the Bible. The Church herself has received this belief from the Synagogue. In fact it is certain that in the epoch of our Lord, the Jews attributed the Pentateuch to Moses. This is clearly established from the words of Jesus Christ reported in the Gospels, as well as from the numerous

passages of the New Testament and from the writings of Philo and Josephus.

Our Saviour speaks of Moses in sixteen passages of the Gospel. In two of them, it is in regard to important events of Exodus (John III. 14; VI. 32). In two other places, we have an allusion to the legislator of the Hebrews, and the terms employed in the second case are worthy of remark: *Is it not Moses that has given you the law?* (Matt. XXIII. 2; John VII. 19). The Saviour speaks repeatedly of certain prescriptions of the Pentateuch (Matt. VIII. 4; Mark VII. 10; Luke XX. 37; John VII. 22-23; etc.), so that we can hardly believe, as some critics pretend, that He simply accommodated Himself to the popular belief in attributing them to Moses; thus, when He says that Moses passed laws concerning leprosy (Lev. XIII., XIV.), obedience to parents (Ex. XX. 12), divorce (Deut. XXIV. 1-4; Mark X. 5). Speaking of the Old Testament in St. Mark and St. Luke, He repeatedly names the "The book of Moses," *Moses and the Prophets; the law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms* (Mark XII. 26; Luke XVI. 29, 31; XXIV. 44). Finally, in St. John (V. 45-47), He appeals to the *writings of Moses*, as giving testimony of His person, and He adds that if the Jews who hear Him really believe in Moses, they ought to believe also in Him, because Moses wrote of Him. His Apostles and disciples have expressed themselves in the same manner about the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch (Luke XVI. 20; XXIV. 27; Acts III. 22; XV. 21; XXVI. 22; XXVIII. 23; Rom. V. 13-14; X. 5, 19; etc.).

2. *Jewish Literature*.—Philo tells us that Moses "wrote sacred volumes, of which one portion is historical and the other contains precepts and prohibitions." "He does not resemble," he adds, "the other writers, but wishes to show that God is the Creator of the Universe" (*De vita Mosis*, L. II). Josephus expressly attributes five books to Moses (*Contra Apionem*, I. 8), and he remarks that they begin with the account of the creation of the world. The Talmud, that great collection of all the Jewish traditions, formally teaches that Moses wrote the Pentateuch. It goes even beyond the truth, saying that all its words were orally dictated to their author. Among the Rabbis there is only disagreement in regard to the last verses of Deuteronomy; some maintain the singular opinion that Moses relates therein, by anticipation,

his own death, which God had revealed to him; others believe, not without probability, that Josue completed with this account the history of the Jewish legislator.

Be it as it may with regard to the latter point, the Talmudists, by attributing to Moses the composition of the Pentateuch, were undoubtedly only echoing the belief of their fathers. The Samaritans, enemies of the Jews, do not express themselves any different from them. The author of the Second Book of Machabees, that of Ecclesiasticus, Paralipomena, of the Third and Fourth Books of Kings, Esdras, Nehemias, all speak in the same manner of the book and law of Moses (II. Mach. vii. 6; Eccli. xxiv. 33; II. Par. xxiii. 18; xxv. 4; xxxiv. 14; xxxv. 12; I. Esd. iii. 2; iv. 18; II. Esd. xiii. 1; III. Ki. ii. 3; IV. Ki. x. 31; etc.). Thus we may go back to the Book of Josue, written before the reign of Saul; "the book of the law" is repeatedly quoted therein (Jos. viii. 31; xxiii. 6).

Hence the entire Hebrew literature renders testimony of the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch. Both the historical and prophetic books which do not quote Moses in explicit terms do this at least in an indirect manner by way of allusions and borrowings. The angel who appears at the beginning of the Book of Judges draws the discourses which he addresses to the Israelites from Exodus and Numbers (Jud. ii. 1-3; cf. Ex. xxiii. 22-23; xxxiv. 12, 13, 15; Num. xxxiii. 55; Deut. vii. 1, 5, 12); the unnamed prophet who reproaches the tribes of the North with infidelity repeats to them words from Exodus (Jud. vi. 8-10; cf. Ex. xx. 2, 3; xxiii. 24), and the message which Jephthe sends to the Ammonites is only an abridgment of several chapters of Numbers (Jud. xi. 15-27; cf. Num. xx-xxii). All the other writers of the Old Testament draw, more or less, from this abundant source of the Pentateuch. "The Jewish people, with its entire history and literature, is like a living, indestructible, and unalterable papyrus, on which is written, as by the finger of God, the text of the *Thorah*. The history posterior to Moses presupposes the law of Sinai as the written law; the literature posterior to Moses, both ancient and modern, attests by its numerous voices the priority of the *Thorah* in its actual form. . . . In one word, the historical, prophetic, didactic, and poetical books of Israel have their foundation and roots in the law of Moses" (Fr. Delitzsch, *Die Genesis*). Such a precise, constant,

and universal tradition explains itself only through the existence of the Pentateuch from the beginning of the history of Israel.

Deuteronomy teaches in formal terms that *Moses wrote the law and gave it to the priests, children of Levi, who carried the Ark of the Covenant of Jehovah, and to all the ancients of Israel* (Deut. xxxi. 9; cf. xxxi. 24). Some extend the meaning of the word "law" to the whole Pentateuch; others restrain it to Deuteronomy, but, even by the latter interpretation, this passage furnishes a more or less indirect proof of the Mosaic origin of the four other books of the Pentateuch; for the fifth, being only an abridgment of the foregoing, necessarily presupposes their existence. Besides, Exodus speaks of "the book" in which the deliverer of Israel receives the order to write the divine prescription to root out the Amalekites (Ex. xvii. 14). It is also said that Moses wrote the words of the law in "the Book of the Covenant," and that then he read it to the people (Ex. xxiv. 4, 7). The list of the encampments of Israel which we read in Numbers (xxxiii. 2) is expressly attributed to Moses.

Independently of these explicit testimonies, we find in the Pentateuch a number of expressions and reflections which fix the date of its composition, because they prove that at the time when the author lived, the Israelites were not yet in the Promised Land. This is what we are going to establish by the examination of the contents of the Pentateuch.

CHAPTER II

MOSAIC ORIGIN OF THE PENTATEUCH—Cont'd

INTRINSIC PROOFS OF THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE PENTATEUCH

1. *How We can Determine whether the Pentateuch was Written at the Time of the Exodus.*—Before establishing the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch by the examination of its contents, it is well to call to mind a few principles which will permit us to understand

more easily what is going to follow, and to seize better the bearing and value of the argument which we are going to set forth.

Every book, even the inspired, bears the stamp of the time and place where it has been written. Nobody can completely rid himself from the surroundings in which he lives; everyone shares more or less the preoccupations, ideas, passions, and needs of those with whom he lives, and he leaves the imprint of these ideas and passions in what he writes and acts. Thus he marks unconsciously the period of time in which he lived; for each century has its particular wants, different tastes, peculiar tendencies, which cling to the circumstances, events, and surroundings. When, therefore, it is possible to know in a certain and sufficiently characterized manner the time in which Moses lived, then it will be easy to weigh the testimony of the tradition which attributes to him the composition of the Pentateuch, and to assure ourselves that it has not been deceived. Now, fortunately, nothing is easier. Although each century is distinguished by particular traits, there are some whose physiognomy is more expressive; so, also, among men, who never look so completely alike but that there are always some peculiar features that distinguish them from one another. In the history of the world there are critical moments; in the history of nations there are revolutions which stir up the passions most vehemently, like the Crusades or the French Revolution. By a concurrence of events and circumstances, sometimes a capital fact presents itself which decides the future and fixes the destinies of a people for centuries, like the victory of the Americans in the War of Independence. In the midst of extraordinary crises, phenomena exhibit themselves which do not reappear in any other period of a people's history.

Moses did flourish in an epoch of this kind. During his life, the Israelites left Egypt, where they had been slaves, commenced to lead an independent life, and set out for the conquest of Palestine. This is the gravest and most important event in a nation's history, for it is its birth to political life. When we find in the Pentateuch a trace of the various movements which such a revolution provoked in the minds; when we find therein the faithful picture of the Exodus, with all its circumstances and eventualities, we have a right to maintain that the work was written in that

very period. Then, it is certain, the Israelites found themselves in a situation which does not present itself anymore in their history.

There are works which show more than any other the stamp of their century; they are those which we call writings "of circumstance," because they have been drawn up, not with a speculative or purely historical view, but with a view to the present moment, to answer to an actual and urgent want, on the occasion, for instance, of a great public danger, such as the apologies of St. Justin and of Tertullian in the midst of the fires of persecution. Compositions of this kind necessarily carry a sensible trace and the seal, so to say, of the events which have provoked their publication, and thus it is easier to fix their date. If the Pentateuch was written by Moses, it must, by the very force of things, be partly a writing "of circumstance," and easy to recognize as such.

With these principles before our mind, we must read the Pentateuch and meditate upon it, in order to find out whether it dates from the time of the exodus or from a later epoch. Moses is an Israelite by origin; does the author of the Pentateuch speak like an Israelite? Moses was raised in Egypt, lived in that country and in the peninsula of Sinai; do we recognize in the book attributed to him that he did live in Egypt and Sinai, that he was raised at the court of the Pharaohs, that he has been in contact with Egyptian society? Moses decided his brethren to leave the Nile valley, where they were oppressed, to go and sacrifice to the true God on Mount Horeb, and then undertake the conquest of the land of Chanaan; does the author of the Pentateuch express himself like a contemporary, a witness of these events? Can we, in a word, recognize in him a man that has seen the facts which he relates, and whose soul has felt the emotions which the exodus must have produced upon the Israelites?

Such are the questions which we have to propose, and which we shall try to solve. We shall commence to show, in exposing the plan of the Pentateuch, that this book is not a simple collection of more or less disconnected pieces, more or less fitted together, but that it forms a consecutive and well coördinated ensemble. Then we shall inquire whether it is really the work of Moses, by examining the design its author had in view, and in what manner

he accomplished it. Finally, we shall see whether all that it contains is becoming to the epoch of the exodus.

2. *Plan of the Pentateuch.*—A certain number of critics have denied the unity of the Pentateuch in general and of Genesis in particular. To believe them, the five books, which tradition attributes to Moses, are only an undigested compilation of various pieces, in which we find neither unity of composition nor unity of mind: repetitions abound, duplications are frequent, the language and style reveal different hands in the different portions; moreover, there are flagrant contradictions in the account of the same facts. Further on, we shall answer these objections in detail; let us now establish the unity of the Pentateuch in a general manner.

According to the actual division of our Bibles, the Pentateuch is divided into five books, known under the names of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy; but this arrangement does not go back to its composition. In keeping account of the matters treated therein and of the plan followed, we ought to divide it into three parts: the introduction, the body of the account, and the recapitulation or summary of the principal points of the Mosaic law. The end, not the sole but the principal end of the work, is to make known that law and the circumstances in which it was given, was, at the time when Israel became a people. All refers to this fundamental idea. Genesis is a real introduction, a worthy frontispiece to the legislation of Sinai; it relates the geneology or origin of God's people from the creation of the world until the establishment of the family of Jacob in the land of Gessen, in Egypt. In the valley of the Nile Israel ceases to be a simple family to become a nation. Here its national history commenced when its people were cruelly persecuted. The account of this persecution opens with the book of Exodus, and with it the body of the work, which comprises, besides Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers. These three books form only one whole; one distinguishes them from one another by their principal end, namely the leaving of Egypt in the first, the levitical ceremonial in the second, and the counting of the people in the third, but all three treat of the same subject, *i. e.*, the law of Moses, with the circumstances that preceded, accompanied and followed its promulgation. Genesis tells us of the covenant which God made with the race of Abraham, Isaac,

and Jacob; Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers teach us in what this covenant consisted and under what conditions it was concluded.

Deuteronomy is connected with the two preceding portions, but is nevertheless a third part quite distinct in its plan and form. It contains the discourses pronounced by Moses, shortly before his death, in the plains of Moab. The legislator of the Hebrews sums up therein the chief points of the law which he gave to his people, in the name of the Lord, and he urges them to be always faithful to it. The generation which left Egypt with him has paid already its tribute to death in the desert; it is necessary to make known to the sons, who soon will go and conquer the Promised Land, the commandments that had been imposed upon their fathers. As the most of the legal prescriptions had been enacted only when circumstances required it, they are now presented in the Book of Deuteronomy as a whole and in a more methodic manner. Undoubtedly, we could conceive the work without this epilogue; however, Deuteronomy forms an integral part of the Pentateuch, for the fourth book does not complete the history of Moses. It is the fifth that contains the general conclusion, that is, the account of the last days of the Hebrew legislator, his canticle and the blessings which he pronounces upon Israel, and even the circumstances of his death, added by a foreign hand (probably by Josue), as the natural complement of a work destined to make known all this great man had done for his people. Therefore, the Pentateuch was drawn up according to a preconceived and faithfully followed plan.

3. *Authenticity of Genesis Proved by the Author's Particular End in View: to Determine the Israelites to Leave Egypt and to Go and Conquer the Promised Land.*—After having established the unity of the Pentateuch by the general end which its author had in view and by the plan he followed there remains for us to discover who this author was, by examining the particular end he pursued in his work.

Besides the religious end, of which we have just spoken, the one who wrote the Pentateuch had, moreover, a particular end, namely, to determine the Israelites to leave Egypt and to go and conquer the Promised Land. This can be easily proved.

It is well to remark that this double end in view, corresponds exactly to the double mission of Moses. This great man had for his first mission, what we may call a universal, lasting mission,

because it interested all times to come : namely to make known the true God and to establish upon solid bases the religion of his people by giving to them a body of institutions and laws. But besides this first mission, he had a temporal and passing one, of a civil and political character. It consisted in drawing out the Israelites from Egypt and leading them into the land of Chanaan, in order that an independent and social life might assure the maintainance and preservation of their religious traditions.

The first part of his mission has been common to him, in several respects, with all the writers of the Old Testament, whose aim it has been to preserve, develop or to revive the religious spirit in the hearts of their people. Hence this alone cannot serve us to determine the date of the Pentateuch. But it is not the same with the second part of the mission of Moses. There has been, in sacred history, only one single period, when one had to induce Israel to leave Egypt and to go and conquer the land of Chanaan. Therefore, if there exists a book that was clearly written with this particular design, it follows that it was written in that epoch ; if this book is the Pentateuch, it follows that the Pentateuch was written in the time of Moses. Now this point, it seems to us, can be easily proved by the examination of this great literary and sacred monument. When we study it carefully, we remark indeed that many pages of the Pentateuch were written only for the men who lived in the time of the exodus. Whilst all that concerns religion, worship, ceremonies, civil and social prescriptions, addresses itself to all the generations of Israel, there are many details which address themselves principally, or even exclusively, to the generation which lived in the time of Moses. Not only does the author speak to that generation, but there are many things which he only could speak to them.

This second design of the author of the Pentateuch corresponds, therefore, exactly to the second part of the mission of Moses, charged to lead Israel into the land of Chanaan.

To execute this great project, Moses was assured of God's protection ; but nevertheless he had to lead the Israelites to their end by ways of persuasion. He could not forcibly cause them to leave Egypt, where bondage had degraded them and where they opposed to him the most insurmountable of obstacles : inertness. He could not determine them, without acting strongly upon their minds and

hearts, to go into a desert without resources, with their wives and children, and to undertake, without arms, without preparations, running all the risks, braving all the dangers, the conquest of a strong and powerful country, whose inhabitants were warlike, and whose mountains were inaccessible. What could he do to triumph over so many obstacles? How could he arouse the energy and will of this enslaved people? By two powerful means: by awakening in their drowsy souls the strongest sentiments of human nature, both the religious sentiment and filial love, and by presenting to them the land of Chanaan as the most desirable country and the most deserving to be coveted.

It was this that Moses did. To induce the Israelites to undertake the conquest of Palestine, he reminded them in every manner, on every occasion, that religion imposed it as a duty upon them to go and occupy the land whose possession God had promised to them and which He had engaged Himself by an oath to put it into their hands. He reminded them that their ancestors had lived there, had bought goods there, and were buried there; finally, he depicted to them the country under the most attractive colors. By dint of placing these things before their eyes, he succeeded in his design; he made them leave Egypt, led them into the desert, determined them to march against Palestine and to attempt, in one word, an undertaking which, humanly speaking, was senseless and impossible.

a. Promise which God Made to Give the Land of Chanaan to the Israelites, and the Obligation which this Promise Imposed upon Them.—The most profound sentiment in the hearts of the children of Jacob was the religious sentiment. It was also especially to this sentiment that the author of the Pentateuch appealed. Continually he tries to reanimate their confidence in Jehovah. To convince them that they ought to leave Egypt, he repeats to them, almost upon every page, that God has given to them the land of Chanaan and that He has promised to make them masters of the whole country; that He had revealed to their ancestors that their posterity should dwell for a long time on the shores of the Nile, but that the day would come when, the measure of the iniquities of the Chanaanites being full, the children of Jacob would enter into possession of the land which He had given them (Gen. xv. 13-14 etc.). That day has come; God will be faithful to His

word, but under the condition that the Israelites shall not resist His will; hence all must depart,—they must set out right away and go and collect the inheritance of their fathers. If they refuse to do this, then they show themselves distrustful of God and disobey His orders. This is the predominant thought of the Pentateuch.

To show that God is faithful to His promises, the sacred writer quotes facts that are most proper to convince the Israelites: The Lord protected Abraham in Egypt and in the country of the Philistines, Isaac at Gerara, Jacob in Mesopotamia, and Joseph in Egypt (Gen. xvii. 17; xx; xxvi; xxviii—xxxiii; xxxix—xli); therefore He will protect the sons like He protected the fathers, provided that the sons imitate the obedience of the fathers. But in what must this obedience consist? To leave Egypt and go into the land of Chanaan. The Israelites cannot doubt that God will be faithful to His promises. Well, then, He has promised to them to give them the land of Chanaan. Here is the most important point of which they are to be reminded, and it is the one upon which the author of Genesis insists the most.

One of the ends which he has most manifestly in view is to point out clearly this promise of God, because it gives them the right of ownership over Palestine, and thus obliges them to establish themselves there. He returns continually to this point; for him it is a capital point. God, who never fails in His promises, has given, he says, to the children of Jacob the country which extends itself on both shores of the Jordan. He points out in detail all the circumstances under which the country was promised to the heirs of Abraham. He relates the history of this promise from the very beginning. Nothing is neglected, nothing is forgotten. The writer presents first Thare and his son Abraham, the ancestors of his race, at Ur, in Chaldea. Thare emigrated with his family to Haran. Here God speaks to Abraham (then only Abram) and says to him: *Come into the land which I shall show thee* (Gen. xii. 1). Such is the prelude of the promise and of the explicit donation which God will make later on.

Abram obeys the order of God and arrives in the the heart of Palestine, at Sichem: *Then, says the sacred text, the Chanaanean lived in the country* (xii. 6). And he immediately adds: *Jehovah appeared to Abram and said to him: I will give this land to*

thy seed (xii. 7). Here is the formal and express promise of the donation. Henceforth the land of Chanaan is the Promised Land.

In all the principal events of the life of the holy patriarch, God repeats His promise, and the sacred author records with the greatest exactitude the renewal of the divine engagements. When Lot separates himself from his uncle to go and live at Sodom, God tells the patriarch that the descendants of his nephew, *i. e.*, the Moabites and Ammonites will have no right to Palestine (xiii. 14-17). Also, Abram does not delay to behave himself there as master, almost like a sovereign. He places himself at the head of the men of the country and defeats the enemies who had come to attack it (xiv.); later on, the native kings make an alliance with him, and beseech his benevolence for their posterity (xxi. 22-24). When he has gained his victory over Chodorlahomor, king of Elam, God again appears to him and announces to him that he would have a son. After Abram had offered a sacrifice to the Lord, Jehovah made a covenant with him, saying: *To thy seed I will give this land, from the river of Egypt even to the great river Euphrates* (xv.) At the moment of the institution of circumcision the donation is repeated (xvii. 8). When he sends Eliezer to seek a wife for his son Isaac in Mesopotamia, the patriarch remembers the divine promise (xxiv. 7). In fact, God not only promised, but "He has sworn" to give Palestine to the posterity of Abraham, and as the Lord cannot violate His promises, and much less His oaths, Israel cannot doubt that it will enter into possession of the Promised Land, since the hour announced has arrived. The author of the Pentateuch insists on this divine oath, and uses the strongest expressions to show its full solemnity: *He raised His hand to swear*, he says.

However, an objection quite naturally presented itself here to the mind of the Hebrews. They had to tell Moses: God has given the Promised Land to Abraham, our father; we are his descendants and can claim it by right. But we are not the only heirs of Abraham; Lot ought to be his heir also; the Moabites and the Ammonites, the Ismaelites and the Arabs, the children of Cetura and of Esau are our brethren. Was the land of Chanaan not promised to them as well as to us, and will they not dispute the possession thereof? To answer this objection, the author of Genesis

does not limit himself to recording the divine declarations; but he establishes the fact that they have been made exclusively in favor of the children of Jacob, and that God has eliminated from the patriarchal succession all those of their brethren that descend from Abraham and Isaac by other children than their father Jacob. Hence to them, and to them alone, belongs Palestine.

b. Filial Piety Makes it a Duty to the Israelites to Depart for the Promised Land.—But the author of Genesis appeals not only to the religious sentiment, but also to filial piety. There is question of taking such an important resolution that he neglects no means at his disposal to arrive at his end. The Israelites must depart for Palestine because God has given it to them, and to them alone; they also should go there because there lived and are buried the patriarchs, their ancestors, and because there they have acquired property. The sacred writer minutely notes the labors and purchases they made in the land of Chanaan.

An entire chapter is devoted to the account of the acquisition, by Abraham, of the cave of Makpelah, near Hebron. It is rather the minutes of a contract of sale than a story properly speaking. Everything is enumerated, even the trees growing in the field where the cave is situated (Gen. xxiii.). Each of the members of the patriarchal family who were successively buried in the grotto is indicated. The author sums up the life of Abraham with the remark: *Abraham was a sojourner in the land of Palestine many days* (xxi. 34), as if he wished to say to his descendants: Behold the land where your ancestor lived and died; will you refuse to go and take it? Just as Moses mentions the purchase of the cave of Makpelah by Abraham, he also mentions the purchase and price of a portion of a field, made by Jacob at Bene-Hemor, near Sichem (xxxiii. 19). The wells dug by the patriarchs are enumerated in the account of their migration. Moses promises to his people, in Deuteronomy, that God will give them, when they shall have taken possession of the Promised Land, *cisterns which they did not dig, vineyards and olive-groves which they did not plant* (Deut. vi. 11). Therefore, do not the children of the patriarchs desire to recover the property of their fathers? Do they not desire to get possession of their tombs? Jacob did not wish to be buried in Egypt, but had requested that his remains should be transferred to Makpelah (Gen. xlix. 29-31; i. 12-13).

Why does the author of Genesis insist on relating in detail these facts? Why these repetitions? He cannot have done this without design. It is evident that the one who wrote Genesis had a particular interest in returning so often to the same subject. The more these repetitions appear inexplicable in themselves, the more it is clear that they must have their explanation in the circumstances under which they were written. What justifies them is the effect they ought to produce on the readers contemporary with Moses. Well, then, we now may ask, in what epoch could an historian attach such a value to the remembrance that the land of Chanaan had been given to the Hebrews, and that their ancestors had their tombs there? At what period could he feel the need of repeating so often to the children of Jacob that Palestine was their inheritance, and that God had guaranteed to them its possession with an oath, to the exclusion of all the other members of the family? Was it in the time of the Kings, when the Chanaanites had been driven away from it for a long time, when the Ammonites and Moabites, the Arabs and Idumeans had settled for centuries in the East and South of Palestine, and when they were themselves peaceable possessors of both shores of the Jordan? Was it in the epoch of the Captivity, when nobody disputed that they were the masters thereof? In one word, was it in a time posterior to the conquest of Palestine and in the epoch of Josue?

No, undoubtedly. This language would have been incomprehensible in these epochs of the history of God's people; then it would have had neither meaning nor bearing. One does not plead a cause when it is gained. One proves his titles of proprietorship only when one wishes to take possession, or to justify his right against those who contest it. One recalls the promises with so much insistence only when one wishes to execute them. There was only one epoch when a Hebrew writer could speak as the author of Genesis speaks. This epoch was the one in which Moses had to determine the children of Jacob to leave the land of Egypt, which they were to regret so often (Ex. xvi. 3; xvii. 3, etc.), and to induce them to undertake the difficult conquest of the land of Chanaan. It was not, we repeat it, an easy task to move a people to risk everything in order to capture a strong and powerful country. To make the people take this energetic resolution, he had, in awakening all their religious and patriotic sentiments, to reanimate

their confidence and assure the victory to them. In order to obtain this result the sacred writer shows to the Israelites that the land of Chanaan is the Promised Land, proves that it belongs to them, that it is their property, that God solemnly engaged Himself by an oath to put them in possession of this country whither he had called their fathers, and that it depended only upon them to conquer it and to become its masters. At that time, all the details, all the repetitions, explain and justify themselves; the least fact has a real importance. It is no longer useless and meaningless to remind them that Abraham had acquired a cave at Hebron, that Isaac had dug wells near Bersabee, that Jacob had bought a field at Sichem, that he wished to be buried in Palestine. Each of these remembrances is proper to enkindle in the soul of the Israelites the desire to conquer what had belonged to their fathers, because the children like to enter into possession of the goods of their ancestors and attach a particular value to them. It is not less to the purpose to make them remember on every occasion that the remains of their ancestors are buried in this country, at Makpelah, because all consider it a sacred duty to keep their family tombs; and that the remains of Joseph are still in Egypt, waiting to be carried along into the Promised Land.

Thus, as much as the language of Genesis is inexplicable and unintelligible at any other time except that of the Exodus, so much is it clear and natural at the moment when there is question of undertaking the conquest of Palestine and of inducing the people of Israel to bear the fatigues and dangers of a war of invasion. Therefore, Genesis could have been written only in the time of the Exodus, in the time of Moses. Everything therein is calculated to excite the desire to enter into possession of the Promised Land; all tends towards this capital and final end Moses had in view. Genesis, in spite of the universal and lasting interest which it has for all times to come, has been above all a writing composed for a determinate time and people, and thus it bears its date, like a discourse addressed by a general of an army to his soldiers at the moment of their entering into a campaign.

4. *Authenticity of the Four Last Books of the Pentateuch Proved by the End Their Author Had in View.*—When Moses has decided the Israelites to leave Egypt, the first part of his mission is fulfilled, but all is not done. They must really leave

the country of Gessen, and, after the accomplishment of this great step, there still remains another one to be made: the conquest of Palestine. The scope of the author of the four last books of the Pentateuch, supposing that they have been written by Moses, must therefore be to induce the children of Jacob to complete the work commenced, to uphold their courage, to animate their confidence, in making them triumph over all difficulties. Moreover, he must prepare them, by giving them a religious and civil law, to become the people of Jehovah, God's people. A posterior writer, relating accomplished facts, would have had neither the same preoccupations, nor the same accent, as a contemporary writer, and especially Moses, the chief actor in this revolution upon which depended the whole future of the Hebrews.

Hence we can recognize Moses in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy by the same signs as in Genesis. He had to allege to the Hebrews the same motives, by adding new ones as circumstances suggested; he had to insist on the particular marks of protection which the Lord was going to lavish upon them, in order to make them persevere in the determination which they have taken. The law must contain traces of the surroundings among which it was given and of the character of the one who gives it; finally, the remembrance of Egypt must be always present to the mind of the writer. Let us inquire whether these are really the traits which distinguish the last books of the Pentateuch.

These books contain two distinct things: accounts of events and of laws. Let us study them successively.

a. General Character of the Four Last Books of the Pentateuch.

—In the first place, the accounts are such that the liberator of the Hebrews must have written them; such as he alone could write them. In fact, to what can they be reduced? To show the difficulties which Moses experiences to uphold the twelve tribes in the desert, to prevent them from returning to Egypt, and to determine them to go into the land of Chanaan. He tells us nothing about things we might have liked to know, for instance, what the Hebrews did in Egypt after the death of Joseph until the beginning of the persecution, but, on the contrary, episodes which could interest only his contemporaries. Henceforth, we are far from listening to that calm tone, from that idyllic simplicity, and often also from that

austere grandeur of the accounts of Genesis! Now, there are frequently quarrels of the household, so to say, that are related to us. Every murmur of the people is recorded. That which is most wounding, most stinging in the language of the revolvers, is reported as it can be done only by the one who has felt the full force of the blow. Israel is not represented to us in its beautiful aspects, as a later admirer of his ancestors would have done in relating this epic period of their history; on the contrary, it is depicted in the worst light. The beginnings of the Jewish nation are not embellished, like those, for instance, of the Latins in the *Eneid*. Such is not the character of the narrator of the *Exodus*. He appears to us as a man who had been intimately mingled with the scenes he describes, who has suffered all kinds of resistance, and who suffers them still. He does not idealize the Israelites; he presents them, on the contrary, under the most repulsive colors, as a strong-headed people (*Ex.* xxxii. 9; xxxiii. 3, 5; etc.), always stubborn, without any noble sentiments. This memorable fact of the departure from Egypt and of the triumph of a people casting off a heavy yoke to conquer liberty and independence; this birth of a nation to public life, which would have furnished to a posterior writer the occasion to exalt the heroism of the Israelites,—all these great events are not to the glorification of the Hebrews, but, on the contrary, are to their condemnation and shame. The Israelites were freed from bondage in spite of themselves; God Himself, through Moses, had to break their chains by force; not one single feature is to their honor. Now then! to speak thus of the enfranchisement of the children of Jacob, to have seen them under this aspect and with such eyes, one must have been not merely a witness, but must also have been, so to say, a victim of them; one must have suffered the ingratitude and revolt of the people to have depicted them with so much bitterness. This tableau is certainly conformable to historic truth, but an historian that would not have been associated with the events could never have described them in such a manner.

Already, when Israel is shut up between the army of the Pharaoh and the Red Sea, it cries out: *Perhaps there were no graves in Egypt, therefore, thou hast brought us to die in the wilderness?* (*Ex.* xiv. 11.) What a bitterness in these words! How offensive must they have been to Moses! When the Egyptians are engulfed in the Red Sea and the first danger is passed, a not less dreadful

one arises: famine. They are now in the open desert; the provisions they had brought along have lasted fourteen days (xvi. 1); at the end of this time they are exhausted. How can provisions be had in this desolate and dry country? The discontent breaks out anew (xvi. 3); very often will these murmurs be heard, and they are always reported in a similar manner.

To uphold the people in the desert, Moses employs the means by which he had succeeded so well in Egypt. He tells them what God has done to deliver them from the yoke of their oppressors; he composes religious and patriotic songs, and spreads his narratives among the multitude; his chants repeated in choir by young maidens are like a potent beverage that strengthens and exalts them. Besides, the second part of the Pentateuch is not drawn up like the first. We find no longer in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers the minutely followed plan, the learned weft which we notice in Genesis. No. These books, forming the body of the work, are composed in a disconnected manner, and by snatches, so to say, according to the occasion and circumstances. The plan and order have not been determined beforehand like for Genesis; it is rather a journal than a book; each great event and all the new laws are recorded in a somewhat desultory manner. It can be easily seen that the author notes the laws and facts as they present themselves. The people consulted Moses in all their embarrassments. When the question was worth the while, the legislator wrote his decision in his journal in the order of its happening. Thus the law concerning the deposits (Lev. vi. 1-7) is found like a waif in the midst of the regulations concerning the sacrifices, of which there is question before and after. A later writer would never have been guilty of such confusion, but here this disorder is like a certificate of origin. The author did not intend to furnish a refined and polished work, but a work that carried his prescriptions according to the wants and circumstances.

b. Repeated Reminders of the Divine Promises.—We have said that the author of the Pentateuch, to induce the Israelites to leave Egypt, represented to them in Genesis the land of Chanaan as the Promised Land, given by the Lord to their fathers. The divine promise is often repeated in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. When, from the midst of the burning bush, God intrusted to Moses the mission to deliver His people oppressed by

the Egyptians, it was that he should lead them into the land of Chanaan (Ex. iii. 8). The Lord has not forgotten *the covenant which he made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob* (ii. 24; cf. iii. 6, 15-17), and Moses must be in His hands the instrument by which He will realize His promises. The solemn moment has arrived, the hour is decisive, the people must leave Egypt to go and conquer the Promised Land. It was on the eve of the plagues which will cover Egypt with mourning. God, to induce the Israelites to take this great resolution, reminds them of His promises (Ex. vi. 2-8). When, later on in the desert of Sinai, God, irritated against the Israelites who had adored the golden calf, wishes to exterminate them entirely, Moses obtains their pardon by reminding the Lord of His promise to the patriarchs to put their posterity into possession of the land of Chanaan (Ex. xxxii. 13; xxxiii. 1; etc.). In Leviticus God promises, as reward for the observance of His law, *the ownership of the land which He will give as an inheritance* to Israel (Lev. xx. 24). In the Book of Numbers, Palestine is always designated as the country which God gives to His people (Num. xiii. 3; xiv. 8-9, 16, 23, 30-31; xv. 2; etc.). In Deuteronomy, the promise and divine donation are continually recalled to mind (Deut. viii. 7-10; see also vi. 10-12).

We would never finish were we to notice all the texts which recall the donation made to the patriarchs and to their posterity of the land of Chanaan (see Deut. i. 8; vi. 3; vii. 1; viii. 18; ix. 4-5, 28; etc.). Thus, the same motives which are alleged in the first book of the Pentateuch to induce the children of Israel to march towards the conquest of the Promised Land, are equally alleged in the books following, and this with a persistence that befits only the epoch when this great revolution took place in the political life of the Hebrews; with a posterior writer, such a persistence would be inexplicable, as we have already had occasion to show.

c. The Miraculous Accounts.—The circumstances permit the sacred writer to make use of a new means to act upon the Israelites: the accounts of miracles. He does not relate them as simply past facts, proper to show the power and grandeur of God, as a posterior writer might have done, but he presents them as arguments suited to enable him to attain his end, which is to arouse the confidence of the Hebrews and to urge them onward. Now, since the children of Israel are on their route towards Palestine, he shows

them that the Lord indeed keeps His promises, in spite of their indocility, little faith, and continual murmurs. This is also one of the principal objects of the four last books of the Pentateuch. The most of the events related therein, aside from the legislative portion, have no other end; the prodigies accomplished by Jehovah in favor of His people are succeeded by others, as so many marks of the constant protection and indefatigable vigilance of the Lord.

This we remark from the beginning of Exodus, and especially in the history of the vocation of Moses, which is at once a miracle and a divine revelation. What a wonderful development in that whole account of the Lord's apparition to Moses in the burning bush! (Ex. III. 6-10). The promises which God had made formerly to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, He now makes to their posterity; the engagements which He had contracted towards their fathers, He declares that He will execute in favor of the children; the land which He had given to the patriarchs, He will deliver into the hands of their heirs, and thus He will have freed them from the bondage of Egypt, which He had formerly foretold (Gen. xv. 13-14) and which He now will cause to end.

God confirms immediately by several miracles the mission of Moses, thus to inspire the people with confidence (cf. Ex. iv. 1-9, 30-31), as well as His messenger. The whole history of the plagues of Egypt is related in such a manner as to show to the Israelites that they can count on God as an all-powerful liberator, that He will fulfill what He has promised. The chapters v. to xiv. show this most evidently. The circumstantial details of the author's mission, the persistence with which he dwells on the objections which he makes to the Lord, and the manner in which the Lord solves them (Ex. III.-IV.), all this indicates a contemporary account made, apparently, to be spread among the oppressed, in order to reanimate their hope and enflame their courage.

The first interview of Moses with the Pharaoh only aggravates the situation of the Israelites subject to hard labor. Hence, great discouragement on their part. Here, as in the rest of the Pentateuch, the sacred author reports the complaints of his compatriots in most expressive terms (Ex. v. 21). Moses himself is discouraged by this check. It needs nothing less than a new manifestation of Jehovah to reanimate his confidence. It was in spite of

himself that he accepted the divine mission; he had alleged all kinds of motives to be excused from the charge of such a difficult enterprise; he shows to the Hebrews that he intermeddles with them only to obey the orders of the Almighty. Then the Lord renews to him, and through him to His people, all the assurances which He has given before about the covenant which He has contracted with the patriarchs. To these ancient obligations is now added that of freeing the Israelites from oppression because He has heard their cries of complaint. Therefore, He affirms and repeats that He will keep His double promise, *i. e.* to deliver them from the yoke of the Egyptians and put them into possession of the Promised Land (vi. 2-8). But they have become so embittered that they do not wish to listen. Thus it became necessary for the Lord to save them in spite of themselves, and He has recourse to the scourges known as the ten Plagues of Egypt. The people refusing to depart, God forces in this manner the Pharaoh to drive them away. Each of these miraculous scourges is for the Israelites a new proof that God will keep His promise (vii. 4-5; viii. 19-22; xi. 7), and they finally consent to set out when the Egyptians press them to leave. All these miracles are related, the sacred author tells us, to show that the children of the patriarchs can count on the Lord's protection and power. And to point out more clearly the divine protectorate, the sacred writer dwells especially at length on all that can contribute to raise the courage of the Hebrews. We have a striking example of this in the account of the passage of the Red Sea. The historian describes this miracle in the most lively colors, because it is more than any other capable of inspiring the Israelites with full confidence in the success of their enterprise. God has thus far combated for them like a warrior (xv. 3); He has gained this so wonderful a victory; He has drowned the army of Pharaoh. Now, what he did at the beginning of the campaign, He will do until the end. Nothing is more expressive than the Canticle composed on this occasion, to give us the key to the whole Pentateuch and to show us that the author of the book is the very same as that of the Canticle. More than once had the people already expressed and should again express their fear of not being strong enough against the inhabitants of the Promised Land (Num. xiv. 3). Let them be without fear. The entire first part is devoted to showing that Jehovah, alone, will gain the battles against

the enemies of the children of Jacob (Ex. xv. 1-21), and be their deliverer.

The other miracles which the Lord multiplies in the desert in favor of the Israelites are presented under the same aspect (Ex. xvi. 6-7; xvii. 11-14; xxix. 40) as that of the passage of the Red Sea; that is, they are related in a manner such as Moses alone could relate them. In the Book of Judges, the prodigies which God accomplished are described to us, on the contrary, not as having for their end to manifest to the Israelites the power of their God and the confidence they ought to have in Him, but as a punishment of the people, when unfaithful, or as a reward for their return to God, when they became converted (Jud. ii. 11; iii. 7, 9; etc.). It is the same in the other books of the Old Testament. Why does the Pentateuch form an exception, if it is not because it was written before the race of Jacob, fleeing from Egypt, was established in the land of Chanaan?

d. Form and Omissions of the Hebrew Legislation: Proofs of Its Mosaic Origin.—The first thing which the liberator of the Israelites had to do in the desert, to prepare his people for the mission they were called to fulfill in the Promised Land, was to give them a law that would render them fit for this design, and impress upon them the character which they should preserve through all ages. The Pentateuch tells us that Moses executed this, indeed.

Under God's inspiration, he formulated different ordinances. But since God makes use of contingent events to manifest His providence, the legislator whom He directs does not give to the Hebrews a systematic and theoretic code, cast, so to say, in one piece; he regulates the affairs from day to day, according as they occur. If we were to find in the Pentateuch a system of laws disposed with order and symmetry, we might harbor a suspicion as to its origin, and ask: Does such a legislation not prove a state of civilization different from that which Israel could have had in the desert? But the legal prescriptions indicate conditions that existed at Sinai, and could only have been formulated there. One thing only is announced as a whole: the moral law, the expression of the eternal law, independent of all times and places, contained in what we call the Decalogue, and which Moses received from God on Mount Sinai. The Mosaic origin of these precepts is so evident

that the most of the Rationalists raise no objection in accepting them.

The law regulates, moreover, all that is essential in religious matters, the worship we have to render to God, the sacrifices and priesthood. All that is independent of circumstances is foreseen and already observed in the peninsula of Sinai. In the long leisures of the desert life, Moses writes the Levitical ritual. Every day they offer victims to the Lord, and soon all the cases which the ceremonial might present are exhibited in practice and have been solved. However, other details still escape to the legislator, and he determines them only when unforeseen circumstances furnish the occasion.

We notice the same character in all the other legal prescriptions. That which is general and ordinary is regulated beforehand, but particular points are omitted. Only when circumstances draw the attention of the legislator to an extraordinary case does he occupy himself with it. Thus, a surprising thing, the law contains no general rule about marriage and the transmission of inheritances. We are instructed only by way of allusion on the divorce, which is, however, such an important institution. It is the same with the customary and traditional laws of the East, according to which only the sons inherited from their father. Since the nomads have but little landed property, this custom offers no difficulty, and the legislator does not even mention it. He occupies himself with this important point only by accident and when the tribes have become proprietors of the soil, when litigious cases present themselves, and when they oblige him to make a decision.

Thus the common law did not provide for the case where a father left only female posterity. This case presented itself one day to Moses and he had to pronounce himself (Num. xxvii. 1-11). The law which punishes the blasphemer with death is also declared on the occasion of the curses of a man who had for father an Egyptian and for mother an Israelitess (Lev. xxiv. 10-16; cf. Num. xv. 32-36). And what is still more remarkable, in this case, as in that of the Sabbath, the sanction of the law is only made after the promulgation of the law itself (Lev. xxiv. 10-16 and Ex. xxii. 28; Num. xv. 32-36 and Ex. xx. 8).

Not only the legal prescriptions are thus regulated from day to day, as it became a people leading a nomadic life in Sinai, but,

moreover, all that the law ordains in the Pentateuch is peculiar to the time of Moses. We even find regulations therein which could not have their origin in Palestine and whose application was possible only to a people camping in the wilderness (Lev. iv. 12, 21; xiii. 46; xiv. 3, 8; xvi. 27, 28; xvii. 3; xxiv. 14, 23; Num. xv. 35-36; xix. 3; etc.) and under the tent (Num. xix. 4), such as that regarding the scapegoat, and many others (Lev. iv. 12; xvi. 10; Num. xix. 2-10; Deut. xxiii. 12-13). Nothing leads us to suppose that the people live in cities and houses; on the contrary, everything proves that they are in the desert (Ex. xvi. 13; xxix. 14; etc.). Only when they are on the plains of Moab, when the trans-jordanic tribes have already their share of territory (Num. xxxii.), does Moses take measures for the division of the Promised Land, and occupy himself with cities which shall be given to the Levites, and the cities of refuge, but he does not designate any (Num. xxxiv.-xxxv.). If the chapter which contains these last prescriptions had been written after the time of Moses, very probably the names of these cities would have been enumerated therein.

Consequently, the Hebrew legislation, on account of the manner in which it was given, is not complete. The omissions therein are numerous, but are not less conclusive than the positive prescriptions in favor of its Mosaic origin. This is a point to which we cannot draw enough attention. That which mostly occupied other legislators, that is, political organization, is wanting with Moses; he does not speak thereof. He found already the patriarchal regimen established, and he keeps it up; the idea of changing it, modifying it, or declaring his willingness to preserve it, does not even seem to enter his mind. Whilst he minutely regulates everything that concerns the religious service and the reciprocal rights of each one, he keeps silence about the government and the political regimen of the twelve tribes whom he desires to become a people. How can we explain a similar silence? Simply because no one, neither he nor others, was thinking about modifying the patriarchal organization received from Abraham and Jacob; it is sufficient in the desert; he does not look any further. The daily offering of the sacrifices often brings up new questions which must be regulated, and he regulates them in practice. The continual relations of men to one another will give rise to litigious, doubtful, and unforeseen cases, upon which he is also obliged to express

himself, and he does express himself. But the organization of the nomadic tribes is sufficient for the nomadic life they lead in the desert; they are contented. This organization will have inconveniences when the people shall be settled in the Promised Land; they will have no common chief, will form a multitude of small and independent states, without cohesion, without unity, and consequently without power; the consequence will be that they are always at the mercy of all invaders, as is attested by the history of the Judges. Moses does not provide for any of these inconveniences; he regulates nothing; he is occupied only with the present. He foresees that the people must have a chief when marching to the conquest of Palestine, and he appoints Josue to replace him after his death. But as to who shall be at the head of Israel after Josue, he does not busy himself, and the Pentateuch does not contain a single word in regard to this subject.

Is there any other epoch than that of Moses where one could forget, so to say, the government of Israel? No. Moses alone could be so indifferent (pardon the expression) about the political future of his people. For him, religion, moral and good civil order was all he wanted. Whoever might have written after the reigns of Saul and David would certainly have alluded to the Judges of Israel, those celebrated heroes, who always held a conspicuous place in the popular remembrance (I. Ki. xii. 11; Ps. lxxxii. 10, 12; Is. ix. 4; x. 26; etc.). If the Hebrew code had been drawn up in the time of the Kings, certainly the author could not have neglected to speak of the sovereign. We can defy all the enemies of the authenticity of the Pentateuch to furnish even a plausible explanation of the omission of royalty in the Hebrew legislation, if Moses is not the author thereof.

e. The Remembrance of Egypt is Still Alive in the Pentateuch.—In both the legislative part and in the historical accounts of the Pentateuch, we find quite a characteristic feature: the place which Egypt occupies therein. It appears all over,—sometimes in a direct manner, sometimes by way of allusion; and it is always presented in such a manner that the unprejudiced reader can easily recognize that Moses alone could think so much of Egypt and mention it so often in his writings.

The deliverance from the bondage of Egypt is recalled to mind at every moment as a very important event, as an event with which

were associated those whom the writer addresses (Num. xxxii. 11; xxxiii. 1; Deut. ix.; xxix. 16; etc.). These are incontestable facts which nobody can deny who has read the Pentateuch. The new science of Egyptology has especially confirmed this. All that is related of Egypt in the Pentateuch, of the sojourn of the Hebrews in that country, and of their exodus, is in perfect accord with the state of Egypt such as it appeared under the Rameses. Now this state was very different from what it was later on, for example, in the epoch of Solomon or in that of the prophets. The Egypt of the Pentateuch is very different from that of the prophets. In the former, one single state; in the latter, an empire parceled out into small principalities. In the former, complete silence about the kingdom of Ethiopia; in the latter, this kingdom appears. In all the details we discover the same exactitude, proving that the Pentateuch is much anterior to the prophets. As to the Egyptian customs, we find them faithfully depicted even to the smallest details. For striking examples, see chapters on ABRAHAM, JOSEPH, PLAGUES OF EGYPT, etc. To be so exact the author of the Pentateuch must necessarily have lived in Egypt; he must have lived with the people whose exodus he describes. This author can have been no other than Moses.

Against this conclusion the Rationalists pretend, however, to have very grave objections. We have now to examine these objections and discuss their value.

CHAPTER III

PHILOLOGICAL OBJECTIONS MADE AGAINST THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE PENTATEUCH

THE arguments alleged by the Rationalists against the authenticity of the Pentateuch can be reduced to two heads: Some are *philological*, and are based on the plurality of documents which the negative criticism discovers therein; the others are *historical*, and founded on certain marks of an epoch posterior to Moses which they pretend to find therein. Let us examine successively the value

of this double argument. Whilst infidels are agreed in denying the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch, which is the *postulatum* of the rationalistic system, about the rest they are in disagreement, and are carried about with every wind of conjecture. It is, therefore, impossible to point out and refute all the difficulties they raise; hence we have to limit ourselves to the principal ones.

Explanation of the Employment of the Divine Names.—God is called systematically in the Pentateuch sometimes Elohim, sometimes Jehovah. The alternative employment of this double name in the different parts of Genesis and in the first six chapters of Exodus, is an incontestable fact. Now this fact is so singular that we cannot attribute it to chance. With chapter vi. 7 the phenomenon ceases and the name of Jehovah is almost solely used.

Negative criticism accounts for this singularity of the double name in pretending that the passages where the name of God is different are of different authors. Those where we read the name of Elohim are of a writer whom we might call the Elohist; those where we read the name of Jahveh, or Jehovah, are in general from a writer whom we can distinguish by the name of Jehovist.

Other critics explain the various use of the names of God in the following manner: God is called Elohim when He is considered as the creator of the world, or as the master of all men; on the contrary, He is called Jehovah when there is question especially of His relations with the chosen people—with the race of Jacob.

What are we to think of these explanations? The latter, if applicable in certain cases, is not so in many others. Therefore it is insufficient. Should we accept the first? To solve this question, it is well to recall to mind the following facts: (1) Elohim is the common name of God; it is applicable to the false gods as well as to the true God, although the Old Testament often designates thereby the true God, as being the only one that has a right to this name. (2) Jehovah is the proper name of the true God. Since polytheism in the time of Moses was universal, the race of Israel alone excepted, there were consequently many gods or Elohim, and it became necessary to distinguish them from one another by a proper name. Thus, the false Phœnician god was called Baal; the gods of Egypt were called Ra, Ammon, Osiris, etc.; the true God was called Jehovah.

The proper name of God being Jehovah, and that of Elohim also belonging to Him by right, it is clear that the Israelites were permitted to employ both indifferently. Sometimes, however, they might judge it better to make use rather of the one than of the other, just as we sometimes employ them indiscriminately by saying: God and Lord, Jesus Christ and Saviour, etc. Did Moses employ without motive, in Genesis, sometimes the name Elohim, sometimes Jehovah, or had he a reason for using them alternately? Since the usage of the divine names is manifestly systematic, it cannot be doubted that the author of the Pentateuch was guided according to a rule which we must try to discover in his writings.

Now what do we notice in Genesis? That its author relates therein events anterior to his epoch and which consequently he could know only with the help of a divine revelation or by tradition. At all times they have admitted that it was by the latter means that Moses learned at least the most of the facts which he related. Only they evaded saying whether it was by oral tradition or by written testimonies. In our time, since the Assyriological discoveries, we can affirm that Moses could easily have had in hand written sources, because we know positively that the cuneiform accounts of the creation, of the deluge, etc., existed in writing in Chaldaic before Abraham emigrated from Ur Kassidim into Palestine.

But if Moses made use of written sources, the regular and well-traced plan of Genesis proves that he did not make a simple compilation; his work is not a work of shreds and patches; it is a writing orderly composed, with a definite end in view; and as to the means he had at his disposal (just as any historian does when he has recourse to sources), he weighs and analyzes them and reproduces them in part, according as he judges proper, and with their help draws up a personal and independent work.

Thus the matter may be summed up as follows: The author of Genesis had documents in hand. Had he two documents relating the same facts, and in which God was called by different names? Or had he only one document and did this document make the distinction of the divine names? Or, on the contrary, did Moses, for good reasons, call God sometimes Elohim, and sometimes Jehovah? We know nothing of all this and cannot solve the question. When criticism has not the necessary means to solve a problem, it should

loyally acknowledge its impotency. Rationalists who propose their contradictory systems with so much assurance know no more than we do. All the hypotheses which we have brought forward are equally possible, but exclude themselves reciprocally; however, one among them may be true.

Be it as it may, it is sufficient to show that, in no case, does it follow from the different suppositions that Moses could not have written the Pentateuch. L. H. Green well remarks in his Introduction to G. Vos on "The Mosaic Origin of the Pentateuch":—

"The divisibility of Genesis, or, as the critics phrase it, the literary analysis of that book, does not in the slightest degree affect the question of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, or of the laws which the Pentateuch contains. And unless it is pressed to the extent of finding mutually inconsistent narratives in Genesis, and thus impugning the truth of the record and the trustworthiness of the history, the hypothesis is one of purely literary interest, and of no theological consequence. It is only the endeavor to carry the divisive hypothesis through the subsequent books of the Pentateuch, that imperils the ascription of the legislation to Moses, as well as of the volume in which the legislation is found. If Chronicles and Kings could be compiled from antecedent authentic records without prejudice to their canonicity, the same is obviously true of Genesis, the latest limit of whose history is almost three centuries prior to the birth of Moses."

Hence, whether the legislator of the Hebrews found the Elohist and Jehovist documents already existent, or only one of these documents, in any case, he could compose Genesis, because all the passages, where the use of the name of Jehovah and of Elohim is systematic, relate to facts anterior to the departure from Egypt.

As to the extent of the use Moses made of these documents, we are willing to believe that he preserved a part thereof, and framed it into his account, and that this part was what they call the Elohist writing. In that which he himself wrote, he undoubtedly preferred to employ the name Jehovah, because God had revealed or rather explained it to him in the vision of the burning bush. Hence it comes that in Exodus and in the subsequent books of the Pentateuch, this name is employed almost exclusively. In Genesis the name Elohim has remained in the passages which tradition had preserved and wherein Moses did not wish, through respect to antiquity, to introduce any radical change. God being called by the double name Elohim and Jehovah, there was no reason for suppressing the name Elohim, which could lawfully be used;

one single thing was necessary, namely, to take care that the readers of Genesis did not take Elohim and Jehovah for two different deities. Moses prevents this error, which the multiplicity of the divine names might cause and which was one of the principal causes of polytheism, by calling God Jehovah-Elohim in the second part of Genesis (ii. 4-iii. 24), and by mingling often these two names in his writings. In giving to the Creator, in the history of the earthly paradise, the name of Jehovah-Elohim, he shows the divine character of Jehovah; moreover, he teaches that Jehovah is the only God, because he does not call him Elohim-Jehovah, or the God Jehovah, as if there were several, but Jehovah-God, as being God alone. Finally, he indicates that Jehovah is the same as Elohim, the one who creates heaven and earth in the cosmogonic narrative. Thus we can admit that the passages wherein we read only the name Elohim are from ancient documents and preserved by Moses the same, or about the same, as he found them, and that those wherein we read the name of Jehovah, alone or alternately with that of Elohim, are his own, or at least have been retouched by him.

If there are some who do not accept these explanations—that is, that the Jehovist documents are from Moses—we cannot absolutely condemn their opinion, although we consider it to be erroneous. In fact, it is not, as we have seen, irreconcilable with the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch, and this is the only capital truth which it is important here to safeguard in order to warrant, outside the dogma of Inspiration, the credibility of the accounts of Exodus.

Because Genesis may have been composed from two ancient documents, the one Elohist, the other Jehovist, it does not follow at all that Moses is not its author, for these documents might have existed anterior to Moses. We have even the certitude, as we have remarked already, that a considerable part of the facts related in the first eleven chapters of Genesis were known not only by Moses, but also by the ancestors of Moses, because to-day we are in possession of its Chaldean form, such as it existed before Abraham, a Chaldean himself. Consequently, one can accept the Elohist and Jehovist hypothesis, without the Mosaic origin suffering anything thereby, because the distinction of the divine names exists only in Genesis and in the first six chapters of Exodus, and from here on it can hardly be said that it longer appears. For more details see Chapter VIII.

CHAPTER IV

*HISTORICAL OBJECTIONS MADE AGAINST THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE PENTATEUCH***UNITY OF THE SANCTUARY IN THE HEBREW RELIGION**

Rationalistic System Admitting a Great Number of Local Sanctuaries with the View of Ruining the Authority of the Pentateuch.—Differing from the Catholic religion, where God multiplies His presence in thousands of churches, the Jewish religion admitted only one Ark of the Covenant, only one Temple, and, before the Temple, only one Tabernacle. Thereby God wished to impress more profoundly upon the mind of the Hebrews the monotheistic idea. He had promised to reside in a particular manner in the Tabernacle (Ex. xxv. 8), and, consequently, the unity of the sanctuary quite naturally recalled to mind the unity of God. The Rationalists object to these teachings of the Bible. To believe them, the ancient Hebrews absolutely ignored the unity of sanctuary; on the contrary, they had in a permanent manner a great number of local sanctuaries, and this from their first beginnings until their transportation into Assyria and Chaldea. This multiplicity of sanctuaries was besides a quite natural consequence of the multiplicity of the Hebrew gods. Only after the Captivity their religion became monotheistic, and the unity of sanctuary was imposed upon all. In order to do this the more easily, they inserted in the ritualistic portion of the Pentateuch the two passages Lev. xvii. 3-9 and Deut. xii. 2-6, thus attributing to Moses a law of quite recent invention.

In this short exposition of the rationalistic system, we can see the end which these authors pursue; it is to destroy the authenticity and authority of the Pentateuch. As to the arguments for the system, there are two of them: an argument of reason, the supposed polytheism of the ancient Hebrews; an argument of fact, the established existence of several sanctuaries in Palestine, before the epoch of the Captivity. In a later chapter we shall refute the first argument and establish that the Hebrew people did always know the unity of God. As to the argument of fact, is it true that there were simultaneously, among the Hebrews, several permanent and

equally legitimate sanctuaries? We deny this, and here is our reason:

1. *Answer to the Arguments of Rationalism.*—It is assumed that the priests were skillful enough, after the Captivity, to impose the unity of the sanctuary, unknown until then, and to make the people believe that this unity of the sanctuary had always been the rule since the time of Moses! Now, it is impossible to suppose that a people, and especially a people having written traditions, could be so ignorant of its history as to accept such an imposture. But, supposing, for sake of argument, that the priests did succeed in doing this, it would at least be a proof of a great skillfulness on their part; and one would expect that people skillful enough for this would not have been so awkward as to leave in the Sacred Books, presumably revised and enlarged by them, the proofs of their imposture! This is pretending that these reformers were at once very skillful and very awkward.

2. Undoubtedly, there is sometimes question, in the Bible, of sacrifices offered elsewhere than before the Tabernacle or in the Temple. We may quote in particular, among the places where these sacred rites were fulfilled: Bethel, Dan, Silo, Gabaon, Galgala.

Sometimes, in fact, there is question of sacrifices offered in places where the Tabernacle was before the building of the Temple; for, the Tabernacle being easily transported, they often changed its place, in the epoch of the Judges, and wherever it was situated there they went to sacrifice, whether it was at Silo, at Galgala, or elsewhere. In cases of this kind, we see an argument, however, in favor of the existence of the law contested by criticism. Sometimes there is question of illegal, schismatical, or even idolatrous sanctuaries, such as those of Dan in the time of the Judges, of Bethel, Dan, and Galgala during the schism of Israel, etc. In this case, one can conclude nothing against the existence of the law; the transgression of a law is not equivalent to its absence. When these schismatical sanctuaries existed, it is not astonishing to see them mentioned in the Bible. But very often the Bible is careful to indicate the illegitimacy of the sanctuary it speaks of; that of Dan is condemned in the Book of Judges (xvii. 6; xviii. 1, 31); that of Bethel by the prophet Amos (iv. 4); that of Galgala by Osee (iv. 15) and Amos (iv. 4). Is it not the duty of every historian to relate the evil and condemn it? However, these consid-

erations are not sufficient to explain all the sacrifices offered elsewhere than in the Tabernacle or Temple. There are sacrifices, like that of Gedeon (Jud. vi.), that of Elias on Mount Carmel (III. Ki. xviii.), etc., which the context does not permit us to regard as illegitimate; and nevertheless they were not offered in the place of central worship of the Hebrews. This fact repeats itself especially in the time of the Judges. To find the explanation of this apparent anomaly, we must first inquire about the exact meaning of the law of Jehovah.

Apart from the passage of Exodus xx. 24-25, which does not appear to refer precisely to the question, two other passages of the Pentateuch contain the law about the unity of sanctuary. Leviticus forbids the Hebrews, then in the desert, to immolate any animal, even for a purely profane purpose, elsewhere than before the Tabernacle, and this under pain of death (xvii. 3-9). This law was observed during the forty years of the sojourn in the desert; then it was quite easy to execute it. But in the times when the Hebrews went to take possession of the Promised Land and when they became dispersed all over this country, this portion of the law became inapplicable. It was then that the law of Deuteronomy intervened (xi. 31-32; xii. 2-6, 13-16). In this law Moses dispenses the Hebrews from presenting in future before the Tabernacle those animals they desire to slaughter for profane use. But what does the legislator decide in regard to the sacrificial immolations? Here are his words: *You shall come to the place, which the Lord your God shall choose out of all your tribes, to put his name there and to dwell in it; and you shall offer in that place your holocausts and victims.* This text gives rise to two important observations:—

a. Whilst the unity of sanctuary is maintained, the prohibition to sacrifice elsewhere than in the center of worship is expressed in terms less absolute than in Leviticus. The legislator provided for this when, on account of the dispersion of the people, cases might present themselves where it would be very difficult to apply the law. Also, the penalty of death, of which there is question in Leviticus, is passed over in silence in Deuteronomy. Moreover, Moses does not say: You shall offer all your sacrifices, *absolutely without exception*, in the place chosen by Jehovah. He contents himself with announcing the law in the terms quoted above, the simplicity of which is so much the more significant, as the Hebrews generally employed universal and hyperbolic expres-

sions. In short, the law of Moses establishes for Palestine a unique, permanent, and official center of divine worship; but it does not forbid us to suppose that one could derogate from it in particular cases, of which the prophets or other representatives of God remained the judges. Let us take, for instance, the sacrifice of Elias on Mount Carmel (III. Ki. xviii.). There was question of proving the impotency of the priests of Baal, and it was, so to say, by a contradictory sacrifice, offered, on the one hand, by the priests of Baal to their idol, and on the other, by Elias to Jehovah, that the prophet succeeded, with the help of the Lord, in showing the inanity of the Chanaanite god. Such a trial could not be made at Jerusalem; the political schism of Israel and of Juda prevented this, as well as the holiness of the Temple. Therefore the sacrifice had to take place, by a divine permission, elsewhere than at Jerusalem.

b. From the Deuteronomical text, Vigouroux, de Broglie, and others, draw another conclusion, namely, that the prohibition to sacrifice in several places was suspended until the erection of the Temple of Jerusalem,—until God *had chosen a place, among all the tribes, to put His name there, and to dwell therein*. There are strong reasons for this explanation of the text, and it is of great advantage. It cuts short all the difficulties in regard to the time of the Judges and that of the first two Kings, in which we find especially the multiplicity of the sacrificial places. However, we cannot accept this conclusion. In fact, we cannot see why this important law should have been suspended during so long a time, having been given especially when it had not the absolutely rigorous character which Rationalists attach to it. It was not more difficult to observe it under the Judges than under the Kings, because the time of the Judges is precisely that in which the Bible makes most frequent mention of general assemblies of the people. Therefore, we believe that Deuteronomy, whilst mitigating the law of Leviticus, maintains it, without putting off its execution until after the building of the Temple. And besides, is it well established that Moses, in speaking of the place in which God would choose to dwell, had in view only the Temple? The Ark of the Covenant, or rather the Propitiatory which surmounted it, was in some sort the dwelling of God, and consequently the expression used by Moses: *The place which the Lord will have*

chosen to dwell therein, may be translated: "The place where the Tabernacle will be." If, therefore, in a certain period of sacred history, it appears to the Bible reader that the existence of a double sanctuary is recognized, or at least a certain state of indecision in the minds of the people, this must be explained, not by a formal suspension in the execution of the law, but by a sort of tolerance, of which we find, according to our view, the explanation in the following fact:—

The *raison d'être* of the Tabernacle was the Ark of the Covenant, which was its heart, so to say; the Tabernacle should keep it and protect it, awaiting, later on, the Temple to fulfill this rôle in a more noble and efficacious manner. Also, we cannot read in Leviticus the laws which concern the Ark and the Tabernacle without being convinced that, in the divine plan, these two objects were inseparable. But, through the actions of men, this design was not always realized. It happened, under the judicature of Heli, that the Hebrews, to obtain the victory, carried the Ark of God on the battle field. The Ark was captured, carried from city to city among the Philistines, and finally, when it was returned to the Hebrews, the latter, we do not know why, did not bring it back to Silo, from where they had taken it, and where they had undoubtedly left the Tabernacle. They deposited it at Cariathiarim, probably expecting to restore it soon to its natural and legal place in the Holy of Holies of the Tabernacle. But that which was, in the mind of the Hebrews, only a temporary measure, lasted, in fact, very long, and even until the building of the Temple. We do not see, indeed, in the Bible, that the Ark and the Tabernacle were ever reunited after the pontificate of Heli, and everything leads us to suppose the contrary. Now, during this time, what became of the law in regard to the oneness of the sanctuary?

The people did not forget this law, but there were, undoubtedly, among the Hebrews, different views about the manner of observing it. Some, supporting themselves on the very *letter* of the law, which ordained to sacrifice in the Tabernacle, believed that there where the Tabernacle was, even deprived of the Ark, there was the center of worship. Others, remembering that the Tabernacle was rather made for the Ark than the Ark for the Tabernacle, believed it to be more conformable to the *spirit* of the law to carry their offerings to the place where the Ark of the Covenant was. These

two contrary opinions, both of which had serious reasons in their favor, undoubtedly merged by and by into one, or rather into a common practice, which permitted each one to offer his sacrifices where he pleased; and this practice was, if not approved, at least tolerated by the Lord.

In fine, the separation of the Ark and of the Tabernacle produced in the mind of the Hebrews a condition analogous in some way to that which later on the schism of the West produced in the mind of the Christians. During this time the Catholics did not feel the least doubt about the unity and universality of the power of the Roman Pontiff. For them there was only one Pope; but the question was to know where he was, at Rome or at Avignon? So also in the time of the Judges and the first Kings; for all there could be only one sanctuary. But the question was to know where it was; and, while the doubt lasted, they believed themselves free to offer their sacrifices in the place where either the Tabernacle or the Ark of the Covenant was situated.

If this theory, or solution of the question, is admitted, then the law of the sanctuary is removed from controversy. But can we admit it? Yes, for it explains all the facts of abnormal appearance which present themselves in the history of the Hebrews, from Heli until Samuel. Before the carrying away the Ark by the Philistines, we see indicated for the sacrifices only one legitimate place,—that is, where the Tabernacle stands. After this event, we see sacrifices offered before both the Ark and Tabernacle, without any reference to the legality or illegality of either or of both. Hardly had the Bethsamites recovered the Ark than they immolate before it the two heifers which brought it back (I. Ki. vi. 15); on the other hand, we see that a religious assembly and sacrifices take place at Maspha (vii. 5, 9), whither undoubtedly the Tabernacle had been transported from Silo. Later on, in the time of David, there is always the same separation; the Ark is still at Cariathiarim (I. Par. xiii. 5) and the Tabernacle at Gabaon (xxi. 29). Now what happens? David orders the Ark to be brought to Jerusalem. During the voyage (II. Ki. vi. 13) the priests offer sacrifices before the sacred chest. The Ark once arrived at Sion and placed under a new Tabernacle, the sacrifices recommence (vi. 17), and the details of the account do not permit us to say that the Lord was displeased with these sacrifices. Several years later, Salomon mounts

the throne, and one of his first cares is to offer a sacrifice to God. Whither does he go to offer it? The Ark is near by, at Sion; and nevertheless he leaves Jerusalem to go to Gabaon, to the old Tabernacle. There it was where he offered to Jehovah thousands of victims, and there, on the following night, God appears to the King in a dream and promises to give to him whatever he would desire. It is impossible to find here a disapprobation of the sacrifice offered on the previous day. But soon Salomon undertakes the great work of his reign, the building of the Temple, and from the time this has been dedicated to the Lord the exceptional or abnormal disappears; the Ark and the Tabernacle—that is, the Temple—are again united. As to the old Mosaic Tabernacle, now that the Temple is erected, it has no longer any *raison d'être*, and also henceforth we behold only one legal and permanent sanctuary of the divine worship: the Temple of Jerusalem.

CHAPTER V

SACRIFICES AMONG THE HEBREWS

Sacrifices Go Back Until Moses.—The Bible teaches that the sacrifices which existed among the Hebrews much anterior to the appearance of Moses were regulated by him, and that he fixed with precision the nature, time, and rite of the various sacrifices to be offered to Jehovah. But Rationalists do not wish to see in Moses the legislator of the Hebrews. For them, the ritual, the *sacerdotal code*, dates only from the return from the Captivity and must be attributed to Esdras. They try to prove this assertion, despite the clear affirmation of the Bible, by showing that the divers points of the ritual attributed to Moses were really known and universally practiced only after the Captivity. For them, and in particular for Wellhausen, the sacrifices, such as they are described in Leviticus, are obligatory only since Esdras. If we carefully go over the documents anterior to this personage, they say, it can be seen that there is question therein of sacrifices completely different from those of the sacerdotal ritual. Let us, therefore, go over the Sacred

Books after Wellhausen, in order to appreciate the value of his arguments.

Answer to the Theories of Rationalistic Criticism.—1. The critic states, first, that, in the whole Pentateuch, the sacerdotal code alone, that is, the ritual laws of Moses, "attaches an especial interest to questions which concern the different kinds of sacrifices and their ritual. . . ." In the *Book of the Covenant*, on the contrary (Ex. xx.-xxiii.), there is no question of a ritual, and it is only recommended "not to sacrifice to any other god but Yahveh. . . . Whilst negative prescriptions are made in regard to the pagan deities, there is no trace of positive prescriptions on the ritual to be followed." It can be easily seen towards what Wellhausen is driving: to the conclusion that Exodus (xx.-xxiii.) is much more ancient than the author of Leviticus; the one personifies the Hebrews before the Captivity, the other, those after the exile. And all this because Moses does not tell in Exodus what he will tell in Leviticus! Let us conclude that the author of the *Orientals* is not the same as the author of the *Misérables*, for these two books were written neither on the same subject nor with the same end.

2. Another argument is: The Jehovistic writing shows us many sacrifices before the time of Moses: Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob have sacrificed, and Cain and Abel made their offerings to the Lord. In the sacerdotal code, on the contrary, there is no question of these ancient sacrifices, and Moses occupies himself only with the sacrifices to come, without occupying himself with those that might have taken place before. "Striking contrast!" says Wellhausen, and he is right, for there is always a striking contrast between an historical account such as that of Genesis, the purpose of which is to relate the past, and a code like Leviticus, which occupies itself with regulations for the future. That which must be proved is that Moses could do neither the one nor the other.

3. After these preliminary arguments, Wellhausen ceases to look for other proofs in the Pentateuch, whose composition is precisely for him the point in question; he next takes up the other historical books, and tries to show by them, that from the time of Moses until the taking of Jerusalem the ritual attributed by us to Moses was unknown. In support of his thesis he quotes: (a) Gedeon. According to the biblical account, it was an angel of the Lord who came to tell

Gedeon to take up arms against the Madianites, and who promised the victory to him (Jud. vi. 11-24). Now, according to this account, Gedeon offered to the angel a kid, with unleavened loaves of bread, and the Vulgate calls this offering a *sacrificium*. Wellhausen, and with him the Rationalists, conclude from this that in the time of the Judges they knew neither the ceremonial rites, nor the Levitical priesthood, nor the unity of sanctuary of which the Pentateuch speaks, and they thus infer that this book is not authentic. But nothing hinders us from saying, nay, more, the context requires, that the word *sacrificium* should be taken here in its most general sense of offering. If Gedeon did offer to the supernatural being a kid and bread, it was under the form of a gift, of a repast, and undoubtedly to verify the reality of this apparition: *Give me*, he said to the angel, *a sign that it is thou that speakest to me* (17), and only then he makes his offering. When, later on, he offers a real sacrifice (26), it was upon the order of the Lord, and consequently he did not need to trouble himself either about the place or about the Levitical character that was wanting to him; the ceremonial laws having God for their author, God certainly could dispense from them as He pleased. (b) The Saul episode, to which Wellhausen makes allusion (I. Ki. xiv. 34), is not a sacrifice, but a simple feast, and it proves, moreover, that in the time of Saul they did not ignore certain ritual prescriptions. There is another sacrifice, quite a real one, offered by Saul (xiii), and because Saul offered it in spite of the ritual prohibitions, he was rejected by God. Why does the critic not speak of this sacrifice? (c) Naaman, the Syrian, speaks of sacrifices according to the indigenous rite of Syria (IV. Ki. v. 17); this does not prove that the Hebrews had no rite of their own. Finally, to prove that under the Judges and Kings the Hebrews did not know the rites of sacrifices, Wellhausen quotes examples which are not sacrifices, or which do not emanate from the Hebrew people; the very clear examples he passes over in silence, contenting himself with attributing them to "posterior rehandlings."

4. After the historians, the prophets: The polemic of the latter consists, according to Wellhausen, in combating the confusion that existed between worship and religion. More importance was already attached to the exterior practices than to the inner sentiments, and the prophets try to diminish the importance of the former in order

to exalt that of the latter. We acknowledge, with the critic, that the prophets often blame the disposition of the Hebrews to multiply the exterior acts in order to believe themselves dispensed afterwards from the inner virtues. In this they seemingly followed the saying bequeathed by one of their inspired ancestors: Obedience is better than sacrifice. But where Wellhausen deceives himself is when he concludes that the Hebrews did not consider at that time the practices of worship as an institution of Jehovah. The truth is that the sacrifices themselves amounted to nothing when they did not beget in the soul of the Hebrews sentiments of adoration, respect, and obedience which they owed to God. When they had not this result, the sacrifices were merely indifferent actions, and even bad, in the sense that the worshippers exhibited a respect and submission which they had not in their hearts.

Let us add that many of these sacrifices were offered outside of Jerusalem, after the schism of the ten tribes. Hence it is not astonishing, when considering the passages invoked by Wellhausen, to read that Jehovah said to the Israelites: *Come ye to Bethel, and do wickedly: to Galgala, and multiply transgressions: and bring in the morning your victims, your tithes in three days . . . for so you would do, O children of Israel* (Amos iv. 4, 5). When in these lines Amos seems to regard as "personal fantasies" the practices of his contemporaries, it is not, as the critic believes, that God did not require offerings or tithes, but because He had prohibited the many sanctuaries, and because the Israelites went nevertheless to Bethel and Galgala, where they joined idolatrous practices with the schism. For the same reason it is written further on: *I hate, and have rejected your festivities . . .* (v. 21). Why? Precisely because in all these festivities the ritual laws, established, are violated, because they are sacrifices without obedience. *Did you offer*, adds the Lord, *victims and sacrifices to me in the desert for forty years, O house of Israel?* Wellhausen interprets these words as if God had said: "You did not then sacrifice to me, do not sacrifice to me to-day"; whilst, on the contrary, in the thought of the prophet, they contain a further grievance against the Israelites who, since the time of Exodus, refused their obedience to God to serve the idols. This interpretation is more ancient than that of the modern critic, because we find it in the discourse of St. Stephen to the Jews (Acts vii. 42; cf. Ps. xciv. 10).

Besides, Jehovah complains through the mouth of the prophet Osee: *Ephraim hath made many altars to sin; altars are become to him unto sin. I shall write to him my manifold laws, which have been accounted as foreign. They shall offer victims, they shall sacrifice flesh, and shall eat it, and the Lord will not receive them* (Osee viii. 11, etc.). Here again it is precisely the multitude of the altars and the violation of the manifold prescriptions of Jehovah which prevent the Lord from accepting the sacrifice of the Hebrews. They are analogous to the reasons which make God say through Isaias: *I am full, I desire not holocausts of rams, and fat of fatlings* (Is. i. 11). When the prophet Micheas expresses himself thus: *Shall I offer holocausts unto the Lord? . . . May the Lord be appeased with thousands of rams? . . . What the Lord requireth of thee is to act uprightly* (vi. 6-8); when Jeremias in his turn cries out in a disdainful tone: *Add to your sacrifices acts of thanksgiving and then eat its flesh!* it is always for the same reason: because the Hebrews did not join obedience with the sacrifice.

But listen what another prophet, Ezechiel, explicitly tells of the sacrifices and their rites, in the picture he draws of the future restoration of the Temple of Jerusalem (xi.-xlviii.). Hence Ezechiel must have known the sacerdotal code, and consequently the latter must have been anterior to the ruin of Juda. It is in vain that Wellhausen maintains that the prophet would not have drawn this picture if the model he proposed to establish had already existed, that is, in Leviticus. Certain details prove that there is question, in the prophecy of Ezechiel, of an ideal restoration and not of the purely material restoration of the Temple. This picture had, therefore, a distinct purpose, and nevertheless the similarity of detail which it presents with the sacerdotal code proves that the latter was already known when the prophecy of Ezechiel appeared.

Wellhausen does not content himself with attempting to establish the existence of two periods in the history of the sacrifice, periods commencing, the one with the patriarchs, and the other with the epoch of Esdras and not with Moses; he goes further and pretends to fix precisely the points on which the sacrifices of the first and of the second period differed. Thus: (1) According to him, until Esdras the oblation of sacrifices was not reserved to the family of Levi or to any other privileged caste; we shall refute this theory in the next chapter. (2) The critic also pretends

that before Esdras the sacrifice was generally joined with a repast, whilst after him the holocaust dominates, and consequently there is no longer any repast, because the holocaust must be consumed entirely. Wellhausen quotes, in support of his theory, repasts joined with sacrifices before the epoch of Esdras. But there is nothing astonishing in this, because the law distinguished between the holocaust and the peaceful sacrifices, of which a portion could be eaten; the Pasch especially presented the character of a repast. Hence there is nothing irreconcilable in the history of the sacrifices before Esdras with the existence of the ritual of the sacrifices; and besides, if we find during this period sacrifices joined with repasts, we also find holocausts like those offered by Saul (I. Ki. xiii. 9), by Salomon (III. Ki. iii. 4), etc. (3) We will not insist upon a last difference pointed out by Wellhausen, without any proof in its support: "The *raison d'être* of the sacrifices," he says, "is henceforth (after Esdras) the sin, and the end which one proposes is its expiation. The ancient sacrifices did not know this correlation. Undoubtedly, they proposed to act by rich offerings on the doubtful or threatening dispositions of the Deity; but one was far from the idea that he could clear himself from a fault by a determined sacrifice. Hebrew antiquity did not know to measure and to weigh the divine wrath in this manner."

We can affirm, on the contrary, that not only many sacrifices anterior to Esdras had an expiatory character, but that everywhere, even among the pagan nations, the idea prevailed that the offenses committed against the Deity could be repaired by expiatory sacrifices; thus the Philistines, after having taken and kept God's Ark, did not return it without making expiatory offerings (I. Ki. vi.); thus Job offered sacrifices for the faults which his children might have committed (Job i. 5), etc. It would be very astonishing, and even very improbable, if the Hebrews would not have known, before Esdras, the expiatory value of the sacrifices, for we find this idea among all peoples and from the most remote antiquity. Indeed, more serious and better proved affirmations must be brought forward than this, to break down both the Jewish and Christian traditions which attribute to Moses the legislation of Leviticus, and consequently the ritual of the sacrifice.

CHAPTER VI

PRIESTHOOD AMONG THE HEBREWS

FROM Abraham until Moses there is no trace in the Bible of a professional priesthood among God's people; they are the elders, the chiefs of the family, who sacrifice to the Lord. But in the Mosaic legislation all is changed, everything is organized; the tribe of Levi is especially designated to officiate in the sanctuary. However, not all the Levites, or children of Levi, are priests, and the priesthood is reserved to one single family of this tribe—the family of Aaron—whose head is the high-priest. Thus, high-priest, priests, and Levites are the three classes, to one of which belongs by birth-right each of the children of Levi. When, after having read in the Pentateuch the history of the institution and organization of the Hebrew priesthood, we go over the other books of the Old Testament, we find this system practiced, and see therein a new proof of the authenticity and veracity of the Pentateuch.

But such is not the opinion of Rationalists. Anxious to rob Moses of the composition of the Pentateuch, they postpone until after the Captivity the origin of the ritual laws, and particularly those which regard the priesthood. As to this point, their scheme may be reduced to the three following affirmations, which we are going to refute successively: (1) The organization of a sacerdotal caste does not go back to Moses; this caste did not appear all at once, but formed itself gradually. (2) The priesthood, in forming itself thus, was not attached to any family whatsoever; however, the sacerdotal caste once established, they tried to make the people believe in its divine institution, by calling themselves the tribe of Levi, chosen by God for His worship. (3) Finally, the distinction between priests and simple Levites, in the sacerdotal caste, is not anterior to the Captivity.

I. *The Sacerdotal Organization Goes Back Until Moses.*—To maintain that Moses did not organize the priesthood among the Hebrews, it is not enough to impugn the veracity and inspiration of the Pentateuch, but also reasons of an evident value are needed to contradict such an ancient and universal tradition as that which makes Moses the organizer of the priesthood, and his brother Aaron the first high-priest. Now, the arguments upon which

Rationalists support themselves are far from having this value. They can be summed up thus: In the historical books which relate the events immediately posterior to Moses, we do not find this sacerdotal organization, which, nevertheless, ought to have been officiating in this epoch, if it dated from Moses. It is only by and by that we see the *professional* priesthood arising and developing itself. Let us follow the Rationalists in the development of this proof.

1. "In the portions which form the nucleus of the Book of Judges," says Wellhausen, "we never find a trace of a priest for whom the divine worship was a profession. Twice, sacrifices are offered by Gedeon and Manue; no priest takes part therein." In the first place, we have to remark that Wellhausen commences to take his examples from a somewhat late epoch. Before the history of the Judges, we possess that of the conquest of the country of Chanaan (Book of Josue), and in this document we find the priesthood repeatedly mentioned. Priests carry the Ark, for instance, in the passage of the Jordan (Jos. iii. 3, sq.). Further on, Josue designates the Gabonites to perform the meanest employments,—the purely material functions which the altar service requires. They had to cut wood and carry the water necessary for worship. Now, it would be astonishing if these employments were assigned to determinate persons, and if the superior offices, those which regarded the worship properly speaking, had no incumbents (ix. 27). The high-priest is designated by name; it is Eleazar. As to the Levites, they are enumerated by families, with the indication of the cities assigned to them for their dwelling (xxi.). Finally, the last words of the book speak of the death of the high-priest and exactly indicate the place of his burial. It is very convenient to deny all authority to these testimonies, and then reject the authenticity of the Book of Josue; but this is not sufficient. One would have to establish, and this is not done, that this book is really not historical, that it was composed in the interest of a party, and that the Hebrews were simple enough to permit themselves to be imposed upon and to accept, as very ancient and absolutely historical, a writing which had seen the light only the day before and which was in contradiction of their oral and written traditions.

And now, to return with Wellhausen to the time of the Judges, we will oppose to his statement the following observations: (a)

The sacrifice of Gedeon, of which we spoke before, having been offered by order of the angel of the Lord, was thereby legitimate. (b) It is the same with the sacrifice of Manue, father of Samson (Jud. xiii. 15-23). (c) Aside from these two facts, there are other more characteristic ones. Thus, Micheas, having installed in his house a schismatic and idolatrous sanctuary, had at first appointed as priest his own son; but a Levite happening to pass, Micheas induced him to stay with him, and he then cried out: *Now I know that God will do me good, since I have a priest of the race of the Levites* (Jud. xvii. 13). Without inquiring here about the meaning of the word *Levite*, from this example it is shown at least that there was, in the time of Micheas, a constituted priesthood, priests by profession, forming an apart caste.

2. Rationalists only commence to perceive an outline of the priesthood, a commencement of castes, in the time that precedes more immediately the royalty. It is especially in the episode of the Bethsamites that Wellhausen affects to find the new order of things: "When the Ark of Yahveh," he says, "was returned from the country of the Philistines upon a cart drawn by cows, the Bethsamites on the territory where they stopped demolished the cart and slaughtered the cows upon a great stone, which served as an altar. This having been done, Levites happened to come along, and they took the Ark from the cart—previously demolished—and, in their turn, deposited it on the same stone upon which the sacrifice had just been installed!" What contradictions, if we believe Wellhausen, and especially what coarse contradictions! One is astonished at never having noticed them in reading the sacred text! But there is no contradiction in the text: *There was a great stone there; the Bethsamites cut the wood of the cart into pieces, put the kins thereon, and offer them as a holocaust to the Lord. The Levites took off (or had taken off) God's ark . . . and placed it upon the stone. The men of Bethsames immolated on this day holocausts to the Lord* (Judges vi. 14). We do not see any contradiction here. The sacred author tells us three things: (a) The Bethsamites offered as a sacrifice the kins which had brought back the Ark (for Bethsames being a Levitical city (Jos. xxi. 16), there is nothing astonishing that there were priests there). (b) The Levites had taken off the Ark from the cart; there is no opposition here, no rivalry between the Bethsamites and the Levites; the author teaches us only that, among

the Bethsamites, the simple Levites had taken the Ark from the cart, as it was their duty to do. (c) Then he teaches us that in the same journey there were still other sacrifices offered to the Lord. Such is the biblical account, very simple and clear; it becomes confused and contradictory only in the translation of Wellhausen. To add to the contradictions, the latter supposes that the Ark and the victims were placed on the same stone; this, strictly speaking, might be possible, but the text does not say so.

3. We now reach the time of the Kings. In the epoch of Saul, Wellhausen recognizes the office as already hereditary and the priesthood quite numerous; but he denies that there was then any privilege in its favor. "Everyone," he says, "can slaughter and offer his victim; even there where there are priests, no example can be found that indicates a removal of laymen from sacred actions, or a fear to partake therein." In support of this affirmation, the critic quotes Samuel, who slept in the place where the Ark was; Saul, who ordained the immolation of oxen (I. Ki. xiv. 34); David, who ate the loaves of proposition (xxi). None of these examples has the value which Wellhausen attributes to them. In the example regarding Saul, we do not know whether we must see therein a sacrifice or simply a rejoicing accompanied with plundering; besides, Saul was reproached by God, and just because he assumed to offer a sacrifice (xiii). As to David, when he and his companions ate the loaves of proposition, they did so in extreme necessity, which dispensed them from the observance of a precept, grave, it is true, but purely positive; it is thus that our Lord in the Gospel justifies the conduct of David (Mark ii. 26). Wellhausen affirms that "the thing, in the primitive account, was not forbidden at all." Now, there is nothing clearer than the distinction made by the priest Achimelech between the *laic, profane bread* and the *sanctified bread*; it is only because laic bread is wanting that he gives to David the loaves of proposition. It is quite plain that the rationalistic critic is wrong in having recourse to this argument, for he contradicts himself by showing that already "laymen were removed from sacred actions." With regard to the example of Samuel our critic says: "Samuel, the Ephraimite, sleeps, by his very office, each night near the Ark of Yahveh, where, according to Leviticus (xvi.), the high-priest can enter only once a year, and then only after the severest preparation and the most minute expiatory ceremonies. Here the

contradiction is so glaring that until now nobody has dared to look it squarely in the face."

This frightful contradiction will disappear when we rectify two hypotheses set forth by the critic. First, he supposes that Samuel was an Ephraimite. Now there is nothing to prove this. His family lived, it is true, in the mountain of Ephraim (I. Ki. i. 1), but the tribes possessed Levitical cities, and one of these cities, Sichem, was precisely in the mountain of Ephraim (Jos. xxi. 21). Samuel could, therefore, be at once from the tribe of Levi and live at Ephraim, and, in fact, we find his name and that of his father in the list of the Levites (I. Par. vi. 23, 28). In the second place, Wellhausen supposes that Samuel slept in the Holy of Holies, in presence of the Ark. The sacred text does not say this. *Samuel*, it is written, *slept in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was* (I. Ki. iii. 3). This indication is sufficiently verified in supposing that the child slept in the precincts of the house of God, as was done later on by those who lived in the cells of the Temple.

4. Under the first three Kings, Wellhausen finds a common tendency to exercise themselves the sacerdotal functions, which would prove that the priestly caste had not yet exclusive duties. We have spoken already of the sacrifices of Saul; as to David and Salomon, commentators admit that they received from God, as a personal right, a certain sacerdotal power, undoubtedly in reward for what they had done for divine worship. But this hypothesis is not absolutely necessary. It is said, indeed, that David and Salomon blessed the people (II. Ki. vi. 18; III. Ki. viii. 55), but this blessing is not in itself a purely sacerdotal action; parents bless their children, and the benediction of which there is question here has rather a paternal than a sacerdotal character. Indeed it is said of David and Salomon that they offered sacrifices, but this is an expression which is employed also in speaking of the layman who offered the victim which the priest immolated. This explains, for instance, I. Par. xvi. 1-2: Here, in fact, we see the priest offering sacrifices to the Lord, and immediately the author adds: "When David had made an end of offering holocausts;" he went to offer them, but by the hands of the priests.

5. The rationalistic system finally contends that it was during the schism of the ten tribes that the sacerdotal caste was definitively established, with its right of inheritance, but that there is still

attached to its privilege a restriction—the King has always the power to appoint priests, even outside the hereditary right. They endeavor to prove this: (a) By the example of Jeroboam, who, having made two golden calves and having them set up at Bethel and at Dan, *instituted priests taken from among the people who did not belong to the sons of Levi* (III. Ki. xii. 31). This example, one will easily admit, proves nothing, for Jeroboam, violating the law by instituting schismatical sanctuaries and by representing Jehovah under the figure of a golden calf, must not have had much scruple as to what concerned the priesthood; (b) by the conduct of Achaz, King of Juda, who, in leaving to the priest Urias the use of the main altar, reserved for himself the brazen altar to sacrifice thereon himself (IV. Ki. xvi. 10–18). From the biblical account it appears that the King of Juda reserved also an altar to sacrifice to the gods of the Assyrians, whose friendship he wished to obtain. Here, again, one cannot conclude anything from the acts of the impious King Achaz as to the existence or non-existence of the laws of which this sovereign made so little account.

II. *The Priests Never Formed a Conventional and Artificial Tribe.*—The progressive origin and the unconscious advance of the sacerdotal caste, such as rationalistic criticism imagines, will not permit it to admit that the priests were the descendants of Levi and members of one and the same tribe; in fact, Rationalists do not permit this relationship among the different tribes of Israel. "We must," says Wellhausen, "represent to ourselves the state of the clergy (in the epoch of the Kings) as very diverse and mixed: hereditary priesthoods, and others which were not; a great variety, an equality of right among all; these are the characteristics of the time." But how can Rationalists, in this hypothesis, explain the fact that the priests have been universally considered, at least since the Captivity, as the descendants of Levi?

1. The critics suppose, in the first place, that the priests, although of different origin, must have tended to become united, to organize and maintain themselves mutually, to form even, as Wellhausen says, a select tribe, but whose ties were those of religious interest and not of blood. They pretend to discover a trace of this tendency in a passage of Deuteronomy, where Moses speaks of the priest who says of his father and mother: *I have not seen them*, and who further says that he *does not know his brethren, nor has*

he any concern for even his children (xxxiii. 9). These words, whose meaning is so clear and which the sacred text refers to Moses, take, in the eyes of Rationalists, quite a different character. For them, they date from the epoch of the schism, and mean that the one who becomes a priest leaves, so to say, the tribe of which he was a member to enter a new tribe, the sacerdotal tribe. "It is not the blood that makes the priest, it is rather the negation of the blood," says Wellhausen.

2. The priests having thus formed a conventional and artificial tribe, how did they succeed in making themselves pass as members of a natural tribe, having Levi for father? Note to what suppositions rationalistic criticism has recourse, in order to explain this enigma: The tribe of Levi must have disappeared quite early; "it must have been carried off by some catastrophe, whose time *might* go back to the Judges." This is their hypothesis; how will they render it probable? By other hypotheses: "The misdeed of Levi . . . can be only a crime committed against the Chanaanite populations. . . . The revenge of the Chanaanites makes itself felt on the two tribes (Simeon and Levi), and their brethren *will not care* to espouse their cause. Thus the dispersion and disappearance *may have* become complete." Wellhausen employs only the doubtful form; nevertheless, he regards as certain the prompt disappearance of the tribe of Levi. But admitting this, how can we explain that later on the priests could maintain to be of the tribe of Levi? Notice how things went. It was found that the priests received a *common* name, that of Levites. Why did they bear this name? Wellhausen observes that this coincidence of name is "enigmatical in the highest degree," and according to him it can be explained only by the following *hypothesis*: "The violent dispersion of the tribe in the time of the Judges would have prompted the isolated Levites, who had no longer any land whereby to nourish themselves, to seek a means of subsistence in the functions of the sacrifice." Perhaps also the appellation of *Levites* given to the priests is derived from the fact that Moses really belonged to the tribe of Levi: "In fact, it appears that this designation was first applied to persons who pretended to be his descendants. Later on, the use of this term underwent an extension." In fine, "here is a field open to hypotheses"; and the only one excluded by the critic is precisely that which is most natural and tradi-

tional, namely, that the priests called themselves Levites because they were the sons of Levi. This solution contradicts the rationalistic thesis; therefore, the critics reject it, and would have it that the priests at first called themselves Levites by mere chance, but, carrying this name, it is quite simple to suppose that they were tempted to claim to be the descendants of Levi, the tribe of Levi. And it is thus that one makes history! A book regarded as authentic and absolutely veracious affirms that things occurred in such and such a manner; a critic appears who discovers that things *might have happened* in such and such a way, and this settles the question! The book has no longer any authority, and the hypothesis becomes a dogma!

III. *Distinction Between Simple Levites and Priests.*—We have seen, in the beginning of this chapter, that in the Mosaic legislation one of the principal characteristics of the sacerdotal organization is the distinction between the simple Levites and priests: to be a priest one had to belong, not only to the tribe of Levi, but also to the family of Aaron. Now, in the eyes of Rationalists, this distinction existed in fact only very late, and this is how, according to them, things chanced to come about: "Until the time of Josias the multiplicity of sanctuaries had for a consequence manifold priesthoods." The Deuteronomic legislator (Josias), in pursuing the centralization of worship, granted to the Levites of the provinces the right to sacrifice in the Temple of Jerusalem, under the same title as those of their colleagues who were hereditarily settled there. But the thing was not so easy to regulate. The sons of Sadoc, who exercised the priesthood at Jerusalem, did not wish to divide the profit with the priests of the other sanctuaries. They reserved to themselves the sacerdotal functions properly speaking, and left to the clergy of the provinces only the inferior employments; in one word, they were *priests*, and the others were only *Levites*. This measure dates from about the time of the Captivity; to justify it, Ezechiel supposed that the priests thus lowered had merited this dispossession on account of some great crime, and thus he spoke in the name of Jehovah: *The Levites that went away far from me, when the children of Israel went astray, and have wandered from me after their idols, and have borne their iniquity: they shall be officers in my sanctuary, and door-keepers of the gates of the house; they shall slay the holocausts, and the victims of the people; and*

they shall stand in their sight, to minister to them. . . . But the priests and Levites, the sons of Sadoc, who kept the ceremonies of my sanctuary, when the children of Israel went astray from me, they shall come near to me, to minister to me; and they shall stand before me, to offer me the fat, and the blood. . . . They shall enter into my sanctuary, and they shall come near to my table (Ezech. xliv. 10-16).

This theory, ingenious as it is, is not admissible. (a) It contradicts tradition, and under this title, as we have said already, it would require in its favor convincing proofs, and not simple hypotheses, pure possibilities. (b) It is founded upon the multiplicity of sanctuaries in the time of the Kings, a theory which we have refuted already. (c) The text of Ezechiel, alleged by Rationalists, has evidently not the meaning they give to it. There is question here of those Levites who took part in the schism of Israel, and who, in punishment for their fault, will henceforth be deprived of the high offices, reserved to those who remained faithful. In speaking of the latter, Ezechiel calls them "the priests and Levites," evident proof that the distinction of the race of Levi into two classes was already well known at the time in which Rationalists pretend that it only commenced.

In fine, what do they bring forward to combat the authority of the Pentateuch, and particularly of Leviticus, on that grave question of the priesthood among the Hebrews? Suppositions, hypotheses, which cannot be compared to the teachings of the Bible, either with respect to its authority, or with that of probability; texts badly translated, and this in the most decisive places; an arbitrary criticism, which, when a passage pleases it, makes of it "an incontrovertible text," and which, when a passage does not please it, declares that it is "very suspicious"; finally, an evident partisan spirit, rejecting *a priori* all that can strengthen the Jewish religion, admitting indiscriminately all that can lend a pretext to attack it. Behold to what the art of rationalistic criticism reduces itself, and behold what makes us to reject it, not only from the point of view of faith, but also on account of sound reason.

CHAPTER VII

FEASTS OF THE HEBREWS

THE Hebrews had five great annual festivals: Easter, Pentecost, the Feast of the Tabernacles, that of Expiation, and that of New Year or of the Trumpets. These five festivals and the manner of celebrating them are indicated in the Mosaic legislation. But the Rationalists who refuse to Moses this legislation, and stay the composition of the sacerdotal code until after the Captivity, pretend, in order to confirm their theory, that the Hebrew festivals vary in number and character, according as we consider them in the sacerdotal code or in those portions of the Pentateuch which they are willing to admit as anterior to the Captivity. Here is the summary of their system: "In the Jehovistic and Deuteronomic portions of the Pentateuch, there is mention made of three feasts only, Easter, Pentecost, and the Tabernacles, and these feasts have for end the celebration of the different periods of the agricultural year; they are feasts of the beginning and end of the harvest-time, and that of vintage, nothing more. On the contrary, in the sacerdotal code (Lev. xxiii.; Num. xxviii., xxix.) the feasts change in number and character; there are two new ones, that of Expiation and that of the New Year, and the three ancient festivals are systematically attached to historical remembrances dating from the epoch of the exodus. Hence there are reasons to see in the Pentateuch fragments of a very different epoch, and to throw back until after the Captivity the composition of the sacerdotal code, for, in the historical books anterior to the exile, the feasts of which there is question present the agricultural character of the Jehovistic writing, and not the historical character of the sacerdotal code."

To prove the falsity of the forgoing, we shall examine successively all the Hebrew feasts, and see whether the teachings given about them, either in the different portions of the Pentateuch, or in the other books of the Old Testament, really present irreconcilable characters.

I. PASCH.—As to this feast, the most important of the Hebrew year, Wellhausen, whom we chiefly refute, is already obliged to admit an exception to his system, and to acknowledge that it had, long before the Captivity, an historical character, and not merely an agricultural one. In fact, in Deuteronomy, whose composition

Rationalists refer to the time of Josias, and in the fragments which they call "Book of the Covenant" and "Law of the Two Tables," and to which they acknowledge a still more ancient origin, the motive of the Pasch is indicated. It is the departure from Egypt of which there is question to celebrate the remembrance: *Thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread . . . as I commanded thee, in the time of the month of new corn, when thou didst come forth out of Egypt* (Ex. xxiii. 15). And further on: *Thou shalt keep the feast of the unleavened bread . . . as I commanded thee in the time of the month of the new corn: for in the month of the spring time thou camest out from Egypt* (Ex. xxxiv. 18). Finally, Deuteronomy expresses itself thus: *Observe the month of new corn, which is the first of the spring, that thou mayst celebrate the phase to the Lord thy God: because in this month the Lord thy God brought thee out of Egypt by night* (xvi. 1). Hence it is not astonishing that the sacerdotal code also attaches the Pasch to the remembrance of the exodus of the Hebrews (Lev. xxiii. 5; Num. xxxviii. 16), according to the formal account of the author of Exodus (xii.-xiii.). Wellhausen discovers, however, a considerable difference, as to this subject, between the sacerdotal code and the anterior legislations. According to the latter the Pasch has been instituted "*because Jahveh struck the firstborn of the Egyptians*"; according to the code, on the contrary, it "*was established at the time of departure, in order that Jahveh might spare the firstborn of Israel.*" Thus, according to the critic, in the sacerdotal code this feast "*is no longer only the commemoration of a supernatural deliverance, but has been a deliverance itself.*" Here we have a distinction as subtile as it is useless; the first time when the Pasch was celebrated (Ex. xii.) it was done *in order* that Jehovah might spare the Hebrews; the years following it was done *because* Jehovah had saved his people. However the constant tradition of the Hebrews is not alone in proclaiming the commemorative character of the feast of the Pasch; the very rite of the festival could not be explained if there were question only of an agricultural solemnity. As to the sacrifice or ransom of the firstborn, which is intimately connected with this festival, it evidently recalls to mind the extermination of the firstborn of the Egyptians. In the face of the categorical affirmation of the Bible as to this subject (Ex. xiii. 12-16), it is not sufficient to say, with Wellhausen, that this sacrifice might be explained without having recourse to history, and that one might

behold therein simply a sign of gratitude towards God for the fruitfulness of the cattle. When there is question of history, it is not sufficient to show that a fact might have happened otherwise; we must know how it did happen. To reason like Wellhausen, one might pretend that it is not sure that the Americans have been conquerors in the Philippine Islands, for they might have been conquered just as well! In fine, if tradition and certain rites of the Pasch permit to see in this solemnity the feast of the opening of harvest-time (Lev. xxiii. 10-14), tradition and the ensemble of the rites do not permit to doubt that this feast has always been regarded as the anniversary of the departure from Egypt.

II. PENTECOST.—The rationalistic theory (agricultural festivals before the exile, historical after the exile) has already been forced to admit an exception for the feast of the Pasch; in regard to Pentecost, a new exception presents itself. In fact, if Rationalists are obliged to admit that all the documents, anterior or posterior to the Captivity, speak of the historical character of the Pasch, they are also obliged to acknowledge that these same documents agree in saying nothing of the historical character of the Pentecost. If we go over the documents regarded by Rationalists as anterior to the exile (Ex. xxiii. 16; xxxiv. 22; Deut. xvi. 9, sq.), or read those which they attribute to Esdras (Lev. xxiii. 15, sq.), we find that everywhere the feast of the Weeks or the First-fruits is regarded as a solemnity destined to close the harvest-time, which the Pasch had inaugurated. Undoubtedly, the Jewish tradition taught that Pentecost had also been instituted in commemoration of the Law given upon Mount Sinai. This Law having been given fifty years after the exodus, it was quite natural that it should contain instructions as to what the Hebrews should do; but, the sacred text not speaking of them, we do not need to stop to justify an assertion which is not contained therein.

III. FEAST OF THE TABERNACLES.—Of the three great annual festivals, there remains, therefore, only that of the Tabernacles, to which *Leviticus* attributes an historical character which *Exodus* and *Deuteronomy* pass over in silence. In the two last-named books (Ex. xxiii. 16; xxxiv. 22; Deut. xvi. 13) the feast in question is presented only under its agricultural aspect. *Leviticus* (xxiii. 42-43) adds the following: *Every one that is of the race of Israel, shall dwell in tabernacles: that your children may know,*

that I made the children of Israel to dwell in tabernacles, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt. Because the latter indication is found neither in *Exodus* nor in *Deuteronomy*, does it follow that these books are not of the same author, nor of the same time as *Leviticus*? One might pretend this, if the indication given by *Leviticus* were in contradiction to those contained in *Exodus* and *Deuteronomy*; but there is nothing of the kind. For, (1) a feast may have an agricultural character and be at the same time an historical remembrance: this double character, as we have seen, is found in the Pasch and Pentecost; hence it is not surprising to discover it in the feast of the Tabernacles. (2) These two characters are so little irreconcilable, that we find them both in the passage of *Leviticus* of which there is question here. (3) There is another place in the Pentateuch where there is question of the feast of the Tabernacles, and that, too, at much length (cf. Num. xxix.). Now, in this passage, there is no question of the historical remembrance with which the feast is connected. To be consistent, Rationalists, therefore, ought to put back this chapter to an epoch anterior to the Captivity; but, on the contrary, they attribute it to the very author of *Leviticus*. Why then do they not admit that the author of *Exodus* and of *Deuteronomy* is the same as that of *Leviticus* and *Numbers*?

IV. FEASTS OF THE TRUMPETS AND OF EXPIATION.—Finally, we have here, according to Wellhausen, a new proof of the recent origin of the sacerdotal code: "To the three great festivals given by tradition, the sacerdotal code adds two more, which it inserts between the Pasch and the Tabernacles: the feast of New Year (or of the Trumpets) on the first day of the seventh month, and the great feast of the Expiations on the tenth day of the same month." As for us, who acknowledge Moses as the author of the Pentateuch, we see nothing astonishing in the fact that the prophet has spoken of these two feasts in one part of his work, and has not mentioned them in any other. The only thing which might surprise at first, is that in several passages Moses has said: *Three times every year you shall celebrate feasts to me; three times in the year all thy males shall appear in the sight of the Almighty Lord the God of Israel* (Ex. xxiii. 14; xxxiv. 23; Deut. xvi. 16). But it is easy to understand that there is question here of the three *great* annual feasts; otherwise the number three would not have

been sufficient, for, besides the three great solemnities, besides the feasts of Trumpets and Expiation, there were other days, such as the Sabbaths and the New Moons, which had a festival character and would have increased the number of feasts. Moreover, it is very probable that in speaking of three solemn epochs in the year, Moses united in one and the same epoch the Trumpets, Expiation, and Tabernacles, for these three feasts followed one another closely, and the first two might be considered as a preparation for the third. This intimate connection seems to be indicated in the 29th Chapter of *Numbers*, which unites these three feasts into one solemnity, that of the seventh month.

As can be seen, it is not the ingenious system invented by Rationalists, with regard to the Hebrew festivals, which can shake in the least manner the authority of the Pentateuch. If we had to accept as truth merely ingenious hypotheses, no fact of history could subsist. Let us suppose the impossible contingency that Christianity has just perished. In a few thousand years a new Wellhausen is found saying: "The feasts of the Christians were essentially agricultural; they celebrated by the four Ember Days the renewal of the seasons; they had an entire month devoted to the worship of flowers; during the whole month of May they loaded their altars with them; about the epoch of planting they went in procession [as is done in Catholic countries] over the fields; at the beginning of November they announced by a doleful feast the mourning which nature is going to assume; they celebrated the end of the year on December 25th and its renewal on January 1st. It is true that later on upright and systematic minds wished to connect these festivals with historical remembrances; but "on the whole, it is not to be disputed that the cycle of the feasts is dependent upon agriculture, the foundation of both life and religion. The earth, the fruitful earth, there we have, definitely, the object of the religion' of the Christians." This is what might some day be said if Christianity were to perish. This is what Wellhausen says of the Hebrew religion, for the latter words which we have quoted literally are his. The system of the contemporary critic is no more true than that which we have attributed to the critics of the future.

CHAPTER VIII

MONOTHEISM OF THE HEBREWS

ONE of the principal theses of the rationalistic critics, one of those of which they make use the most in their attacks against the Bible, consists in pretending that the Hebrews were not monotheists at first, but that they attained to this gradually and very slowly, about the time of the prophets: from polytheism to the worship of an one only God. This pretension permits them to deny revelation and to consider monotheism as the natural fruit of the progress of the human mind. Only it is easier to affirm than to prove, and we shall see, by the examination of the different reasons alleged by the critics in favor of their system, that this theory has absolutely no foundation.

I. *Arguments Imagined by Rationalists to Establish Primitive Polytheism Among the Hebrews.—Refutation.*—All the Semitic peoples, says J. Soury, have at first been polytheists; hence the Hebrews must have necessarily, like the Assyrians, the Arabs, etc., been at first idolaters, and raised themselves only little by little to monotheism. This argument is fundamentally wrong; no people raised themselves from polytheism to monotheism, but, on the contrary, all seem to have passed from monotheism to polytheism. All the ancient nations were convinced that their religion was so much more perfect and purer as one goes back into its history, and this universal belief is confirmed by the examination of the diverse theogonies, which become more corrupt according as they grow older. The induction to be drawn from this fact is certainly not that of a primitive polytheism. But furthermore, the most of the Semitic nations, and the study of their most ancient monuments clearly reveals to us their antique monotheism. Let us content ourselves with a few examples, drawn from nations that had the closest relations with the Hebrews.

1. In *Egypt* we see polytheism prevailing in the time of Moses. But hieroglyphic monuments, more than fifteen centuries anterior to that period, teach us that in those remote times the religion was essentially monotheistic. This is a fact which can be disputed no longer since the researches of the great Egyptologists, Mariette, de Rougé, Pierret, Ebers, Rawlinson, etc. Even later on, under the formulas of an unbridled polytheism, we discover the notion of one

only eternal God, of whom the Egyptian deities are only the personified attributes.

2. As for the *Assyro-Chaldaic* religion, on account of the absence of such ancient monuments we are not permitted to be so assertive regarding its original nature; but from the study of the inscriptions it is clear that, under the bark of polytheism, there was in Assyria, like in Egypt, the fundamental notion of the divine unity. If this one God became multiple it was, according to M. Maspero, because "each of the material works He himself accomplished was considered as produced by a distinct being who bore a special name."

3. In *Phœnicia, Chanaan, and Syria*, it is again the primitive monotheism that reveals itself under idolatrous appearances. If polytheism became the religion of these peoples, it was because the one only god, Baal, had been multiplied in the course of time; the same Baal adored at Tyre and at Sidon and other localities became Baal-Tsour, Baal-Sidon, etc.; moreover, considered in his diverse manifestations, he became Tanit, or the face of Baal, Astarte, etc. Such is the teaching of the most learned and most versed in the studies of Phœnician epigraphy. In fine, we could therefore reverse the argument of J. Soury and say: "All the Semitic nations have been primitively monotheists; therefore the Hebrews must have been such also."

II. *Several Passages Falsely Alleged.*—However, J. Soury feels very well that this argument, were it as just as it is false, is insufficient for his thesis, and he attempts to prove directly the primitive polytheism of the Hebrews. For this purpose he searches the Bible for some passages which he interprets in his own way, and which, according to him, prove that the Hebrews did not have an one only God. To appreciate the value of this new argument, let us examine the various passages alleged by J. Soury. (1) "Repeatedly," he says, "the Bible presents to us the Abrahamites as idolaters and polytheists. . . . In the Book of Josue, Terah, father of Abraham, is given as a pagan and polytheist, as well as his ancestors. . . . Rachel steals the idols of her father. . . . Jacob buries under an oak-tree, near Sichem, the idols, the talismen, and amulets of the people of his house." What does all this prove? That in the time when Abraham separated himself from the Chaldeans, the latter possessed no longer in its purity the monotheistic idea, and that even the

family of Abraham was not free from error. But this is in perfect conformity with the Bible, and explains why God chose Abraham and removed him from his country, in order to make him the father of the faithful. (2) From the time of Abraham until Jesus Christ, the Hebrews often fell into idolatry, under the influence of the near-by polytheistic peoples and licentious practices which idolatry authorized. But this fact, acknowledged by all, proves nothing in favor of the thesis of our adversary. This idolatrous worship is always represented to us in the Bible as a crime, an *adultery*, and, even in the worst days, there were always Israelites that remained faithful to the true God, whilst the prevaricators, chastised by the divine hand, soon acknowledged their error and returned to Jehovah. Finally, let us remark that the chiefs—those who represented the nation—generally remained monotheists, at least until the time of the schism, that is, precisely until the epoch in which the critics pretend that the monotheistic idea arose. Against this remark, J. Soury tries to oppose what he calls the idolatry and open polytheism of David. It would seem that here our opponent must have been distracted, for the Psalmist affirms hundreds of times the unity of God: *Who is God but Jehovah?* (Ps. xvii.) *There is no God besides thee* (II. Ki. vii. 22). (3) The Semitic nations liked to combine the names of their gods with the proper names of individuals or localities; it is thus, for instance, that in the lists of the kings of Ninive and of Babylon we find all the Chaldean deities: Assur in Assurbanipal, Bel in Balthasar, Adar in Adarpalassar, Nebo in Nabuchodonosor, etc. It is the same in Phœnicia and in Egypt. Hence we may conclude that an examination of the Hebrew proper names will furnish us the nomenclature of the deities adored by this people, and will tell us whether it was polytheistic or not. Soury has made this inquiry, and he has thought himself able to conclude therefrom the primitive polytheism of the Hebrews. Indeed, almost everywhere the name of Jehovah, *El*, or *Yah*, enters into the composition of Hebrew names, and even some impious kings, like Ahab or the kings of Israel, follow this custom. All this is true, but, in the whole Bible, Soury has discovered three personages into whose names enters that of Baal, and from this he concludes that the Hebrews adored Baal as well as Jehovah. For us, it seems that the inquiries of Soury, ending in three idolatrous names, prove more in favor of

the Hebrew monotheism than of its polytheism. And which are these names? One, Esbaal, belongs to a son of Saul; another, Meribaal, is that of a grandson of the same king; and this name signifies *combat against Baal*; finally, the third, Jerobaal, is the name which Gedeon received after having overthrown the altar of Baal, and it signifies precisely *the one who wrestles with Baal*. In all this there is nothing that proves the worship of the Israelites for Baal. As to the city of Baalath-Beer, which he also quotes, Soury does an ungracious thing to the Hebrews when he reproaches them with this name, because this city bore already this idolatrous name before the conquest of Palestine by Josue. One might just as well reproach the French with adoring Luna, Mars, and Mercurius, because they call the days of the week *lundi (Lunæ dies)*, *mardi (Martis dies)*, etc.

III. *The Words El and Jehovah do Not Signify Different Deities.*—The God of the Hebrews is called by several different names in the Sacred Books, and chiefly *El* and *Jehovah*. From this J. Soury, with others after him, and quite recently Eichthal, have concluded that there was a plurality of gods among the Israelites. But everywhere we see persons bearing several names, and in order that the conclusion of Rationalists may be a just one, they have to establish that the divine names of the Hebrews were not synonyms, but designated distinct personages. This is what the critics attempt to do, by trying to establish that *El* and *Jehovah* were with the Hebrews different deities.

1. *El*, according to Soury, was the national god of the Hebrews until the exodus, and, since we find this name under the form of *Ilou* in the Semitic languages, the French Rationalist concludes that this God of the Hebrews was none other than the God adored as the Supreme Deity by the Assyrians, Chanaanites, etc. We acknowledge that *El* is found in the language of idolatrous nations; but this explains itself quite naturally, for J. Soury himself admits this when he says: "The idea of God is rendered in Assyrian by the word *Ilou*." The word *El*, or *Ilou*, is therefore only the common name of the Deity, and not the name given to any particular god to distinguish him from another; consequently it is quite natural to find the word *El* in the language of all the people who have believed in the existence of God, whatever might have otherwise been the number and nature of their deities. Moreover, the

habit of the Assyro-Chaldeans to add the name Ilou to that of all their gods, Samas, Sin, etc., gives us to understand that this name must have primitively designated their one only god, and thus tends to prove, not the primitive polytheism of the Hebrews, but the primitive monotheism of the Assyrians.

There is, however, another difficulty; this is that very often, in the Hebrew Bible, God is called, not El or Eloah in the singular, but Elohim in the plural; from this, for Soury to determine on the primitive polytheism of the Israelites there is only one step, and he takes it. But this argument is without value in the face of the following considerations: (1) In the ancient Hebrew we find Elohim exclusively in the plural; hence, primitively, it was one of those words we meet with in all the languages, which had no regular form; why? Very probably, as Furst says, to signify the sum of the infinite perfections included in the idea of God, the Divine Majesty. Be this as it may, one can thence conclude nothing against the unity of the God of the Hebrews. (2) When the Bible designates by *Elohim*, the gods of the pagans, it always puts in the plural the verbs or qualifications which refer to the substantive. On the contrary, when there is question of the God of the Hebrews, although the name has the plural form, the phrase is constructed in the singular; hardly more than four exceptions can be quoted from among more than two thousand passages, and these four exceptions may be easily explained through a slight distraction of the copyist, a plural name naturally calling for a verb in the plural. (3) M. Soury pretends that this construction in the singular of phrases having Elohim for their subject, comes from corrections posterior to the composition of the Sacred Books. But this supposition is inadmissible, for we meet with passages where Elohim is employed as attribute of a name in the singular: *Jehovah is the Elohim of my father!* chant the people after the passage of the Red Sea. Jehovah being certainly a name in the singular, how could the Hebrews have added to the name of Elohim if they had not given to this word, as to the other, a meaning in the singular?

2. As to *Jehovah*, or rather *Jahveh*, it was not for the Hebrews, according to Soury, the name of their one only God, but of one of their numerous Elohim. It was the sun, the fire, which they adored under this name of Jehovah, and they represented him by a calf. This fantastic notion has been recently adopted by M. Eichthal.

What proofs does he give for it? That Jehovah revealed Himself to Moses from the midst of the burning bush, when He proclaims His law from the midst of fire, etc. If these are proofs, why not accuse us Christians also of idolatry when we burn wax and incense before our God? But here is another text quite as decisive: "Jahveh," says Eichthal, "is in the column of fire that precedes and protects the Israelites in the desert." But since during the day this fiery column becomes a column of clouds, we would have to conclude that Jehovah was at once, for the Hebrews, the god of fire and the god of water. However, the critic himself acknowledges, and this is sufficient for us, that the Bible speaks of the calf-worship only to condemn it. Nevertheless, let us quote a last text, which appears at first to be quite decisive in favor of Eichthal. Behold, indeed, what the critic tells us: "The prophet Osee announcing the ruin of Samaria declares that 'Jahveh has cast off its calf, that it will be destroyed and broken into pieces'" (viii. 5-6). To read this passage thus translated one might believe that Jahveh has cast off his calf *to himself*; but return to the text and you will see that in saying: "Jahveh has cast off his calf," Eichthal meant to say, "Jahveh has rejected the calf of Samaria, which shall be destroyed," etc. Thus restored, what does this text prove but that Jehovah did not accept the calf-worship? Besides, the name Jehovah is not even in the text, which is very correctly translated by the Vulgate.

In answer to the gratuitous rationalistic theory on the subject of Jehovah, we say: (1) The alleged texts prove nothing. (2) How could the polytheistic notion of Jehovah have transformed itself into such a different notion of a unique, infinite Jehovah, creator of the universe, which Eichthal is obliged to acknowledge in the books of the prophets? "This is a question of the highest interest," says Eichthal. We willingly admit this; there is question of nothing less than to explain how Jehovah could gradually become something contrary to himself! Unfortunately, the critic is obliged to admit that putting a question is not solving it. (3) The very name Jahveh proves that it signifies the only God. Eichthal denies that there is an etymological relation between the name *Jahveh* and the formula: *I am who am* (Ex. iii. 14). Eichthal pretends that this formula was invented by the Hebrews, whilst we claim that they received it from the mouth of God. However, and here we copy the rationalistic critic, "if the formula

’Eheî’ ascher ’Eheî’ (I am who am) is before all a philosophical formula, it may be considered as a protestation against the idolatrous worships. It expresses that Jahveh alone is the true God, the living God, the *Being* in opposition to that which is not.” We cannot better justify the production of this formula at the moment when the Hebrews were surrounded by pagans and when several among them delivered themselves up to the worship of idols. *’Eheî’* means *I am*, whilst *Jahveh* signifies *He is*; therefore, concludes Eichthal, there is not, between *’Eheî’* and *Jahveh*, any etymological relation. We believe, on the contrary, that one can hardly find, between two words, a more complete etymological relation than this. Besides, even prescinding from the formula from which the Bible derives the word Jahveh, it is certain that the most of the exegetists connect this name with the verb *havah*, to be. Eichthal himself cannot assign to it any other origin, and he concludes: “In this case it would mean: *He is*, or *He makes to be*; and will designate either *the Being par excellence*, or *the Creator*.” Both meanings necessarily imply the idea of an only God.

Such are, exposed and refuted as briefly as possible, the arguments imagined by Rationalists to establish the primitive polytheism of the Hebrews. This is, we said at the beginning, a favorite theory of the prevailing criticism; it will pass, like so many others, and in the ages to come Christian children will still know, what the great and learned men of to-day have forgotten, that the first commandment of the Hebrews may be translated thus: *I am the Lord thy God, thou shalt not have any strange gods before Me*.

George Rawlinson has devoted an entire work to the study of the subject in question, and he arrived at the following conclusion: “The historic review which has been here made lends no support to the theory that there is a uniform growth and progress of religions from fetichism to polytheism, from polytheism to monotheism, and from monotheism to positivism, as maintained by the followers of Comte. None of the religions here described shows any signs of having been developed out of fetichism, unless it be the shamanism of the Etruscans. In most of them the monotheistic idea is most prominent at first, and gradually becomes obscured and gives way before a polytheistic corruption. In all, there is one element at least, viz., sacrifice, for it can scarcely have been

by the exercise of his reason that man came so generally to believe that the superior powers, whatever they were, would be pleased by the violent death of one or more of their creatures. Altogether, the theory to which the facts appear on the whole to point is the existence of the primitive religion, communicated to man from without, whereof monotheism and expiatory sacrifice were parts, and the gradual clouding of this primitive revelation everywhere, unless it were among the Hebrews" (G. Rawlinson, "Ancient Religion," p. 175).

CHAPTER IX

THE PROBABILITY OF THE FACTS RELATED IN THE LAST FOUR BOOKS OF THE PENTATEUCH

A PART of the events related in Exodus and Numbers are miraculous and supernatural. On this account negative criticism rejects them *a priori* and before all examination. Other events of this epoch do not offer the same character, but Rationalists also refuse to admit them, in order to be better able to deny the prodigies themselves and rob Moses of the composition of the Pentateuch. That which, in their eyes, is sufficient to do away with all belief in the accounts of the sacred historian, is their improbability.

Before entering into the detail of refutation, it is necessary to say a few words about the principles themselves. In the first place, we must remember that probability or improbability is, in history, a bad criterion. It is bad because it depends too much upon the personal impression of the one who judges, and especially because there are improbable things which are nevertheless true. Hence, when there are no other means of determining, this rule cannot enable us to discover with certitude either the reality or the falsity of an event. This proceeding is first too subjective; that which appears credible to one appears incredible to another. One Rationalist admits the existence of Moses and several of the events of the exodus; another denies all *in globo* and without distinction; whilst the Catholic accepts, with tradition, the whole account of the Pentateuch. However, the impression of the infidel proves by itself nothing more

than that of the believer; in neither case is this impression a solid argument, because an historical event is an objective fact. Now we can know a fact only through testimony, and not through our personal impressions. That Moses has existed or has not existed, that he has written or has not written the Pentateuch, that he has delivered or has not delivered his people from the bondage of Egypt, are certainly questions of fact. If all the facts related by the Pentateuch are real, as it was universally admitted until now, all the improbabilities which rationalistic critics pretend to discover therein will evidently not change anything. They might recruit some followers, like the Sophists recruited followers in the time of Socrates, by presenting their opinions in a captious manner; but they cannot make probability the absolute rule of the true.

How many improbable things are there which, however, are very real! What is there, for instance, more improbable, in itself, when one reflects a little, than the history of Napoleon I., from his birth until his death, his prodigious destiny, his numberless victories, his extraordinary elevation, his campaign in the Orient, his domination over Europe, his fascinating ascendancy over men, his civil institutions, his almost universal genius, occupying himself at once with Church and State, with sciences and arts, his no less astonishing fall than his elevation, his death on an island of the Ocean? Who of the rationalistic exegetists would not treat all these facts as myths, if he should read them in the Bible? And nevertheless nothing is more real or less doubtful.

Undoubtedly, because certain improbable facts are true, it does not follow that all are so; but have we not at least the right to content ourselves with the sole improbability in order to deny the reality of an event which is related in an historical book, especially when it is possible to explain its extraordinary character by the circumstances themselves. Improbable and impossible are two very different things. If they would prove to us that such or such a biblical fact is impossible, very well; we would have only to acknowledge that it is false; the demonstration would be made. But if one were to succeed only in establishing its improbability, by presenting the events under a certain light, by neglecting a part of the circumstances and by skillfully grouping certain others; if one were to tell us, for instance, that he could not believe that the Israelites cast a golden calf in the desert, we might content

ourselves by answering: "The true may sometimes not be probable." Would it be more credible that the ancient Egyptians knew how to manufacture jewels as beautiful and as perfect as those of Queen Aah-Hotep, if one had not found them in her tomb?

It is true that, for the atheists and pantheists, a miracle is impossible, because it is a supernatural work and because, according to them, there is nothing outside the forces of nature. Consequently, they reject as impossible the miraculous accounts contained in the Scriptures, but it can be seen that they do this because they support themselves upon a false principle, not in virtue of the rules of historical criticism. Therefore, we have to refute their erroneous principles in the name of philosophy; criticism properly speaking does not enter into this question. M. Reuss, who, of all the recent critics, is the one who insists the most upon the improbability of the facts of the exodus, declares, however, that he will leave aside in his discussion "all the miraculous elements comprised in these antique accounts," because, he says, "every attempt to reduce a fact of this category to natural proportions, with much more reason the theoretical doubt, would be sufficient to throw suspicion on the good faith or impartiality of the historian." He will occupy himself, he says, only "with ordinary facts." It is this also that we are going to do.

It follows from what we have said that, even if criticism should prove that several of the facts contained in the Pentateuch are improbable, it would not follow at all that they are not true. We might be furnished at most with a presumption against the historian, but we would not have given a real proof. But let us go further, and without stopping any longer at these general considerations, let us examine in particular some of the contested facts and see whether they are as improbable as one supposes.

I. THE PERSECUTION OF THE HEBREWS IN EGYPT.—M. Reuss does not openly deny that the Hebrews might have been persecuted in Egypt, but many details in the account of this event appear questionable to him. Here are his own words: "Are the facts given in the books of Exodus and Numbers related by a contemporary and eyewitness? The account commences by telling us that, after a more or less long period of prosperity, the Israelites established in Egypt found themselves exposed to the vexations of the natives, who were afraid of them, and who, by all kinds of means, sought

to weaken them, especially by employing them at hard labor on public works. All this has absolutely nothing improbable about it. We know through other sources that there were in Egypt numerous dynastic revolutions, and that foreign rulers, probably Semites, ended in being overthrown by native monarchs. We can understand that the colony which formerly came from Chanaan might have been entangled in the overthrow of those that had been its protectors. However, one has to admit that we find nothing here but a weak reflex of a similar event, if this must explain, as is willingly admitted, the change of fortune of the Israelites in Egypt." (*Die Heilige Geschichte und das Gesetz.*)

The Book of Exodus tells us expressly that the new king who persecuted the Hebrews *knew not Joseph* (Ex. i. 8). The author does not enter into details, precisely because all the readers at that time knew very well that the Hyksos or Shepherd Kings had been driven away by the native Pharaohs, and because it was sufficient for him to allude briefly to this revolution, which was of no interest for him to relate. For the solution of most of the rationalistic objections against the authenticity and veracity of the Pentateuch, we only need to recall to mind what we have said of the end and plan of Moses. What he wants is to determine his people to leave Egypt and to march to the conquest of the Promised Land; this is the only thing that interests him, and all that does not tend to his purpose he abbreviates or passes over entirely in silence. It is thus that he teaches us nothing about the sojourn of the children of Jacob in the valley of the Nile from the death of Joseph until the birth of Moses.

The Hyksos were not simply the protectors of the Israelites, as Reuss tells us; they were of the same race and both had in Egypt the same interests; consequently both had to resist the native kings in the war which the latter had made against the conquerors of Lower Egypt; hence they had to undergo also the same vexatious consequences of defeat. The hatred of the Egyptians against the Asiatics who had held the most beautiful part of Egypt under their dominion during several centuries shows itself in a number of monuments. Not less than 150 years of war was needed for the Egyptian patriots to triumph completely over the power of the Hyksos; yet the Pharaoh Ahmes, their conqueror, was obliged to grant to them, according to Manetho, a capitulation

which permitted the remnant of the hostile army to retire into the countries of Chanaan and Aram.

The Israelites had naturally defended against the natives, in the ranks of the Hyksos, the soil which they had received through the liberality of the latter in the time of Joseph. Some among them must have accompanied their compatriots into parts of Syria, whither they fled after their defeat. A monument of Karnak confirms this. It informs us that between the death of Joseph and the exodus, the Pharaoh Thotmes III. had to combat, among other enemies, in Palestine, those which the royal list calls Jacobel and Josephel, that is, descendants of Jacob and of Joseph. Indeed, we read in the list of the peoples or tribes which composed the confederate army defeated by Thotmes III. at Mageddo: *Jakobaal, Josepal*.

The rôle which the Israelites must have played in the last war of the Hyksos permits us to explain easily how the conquering pharaohs must have treated the Israelites, who had been conquered with the ancient invaders. They kept them in their States, like many other prisoners of war of whom there is question in the hieroglyphic monuments, because they needed them to execute the statute-labors; but they watched over them very closely in order to prevent them from increasing beyond measure and making common cause with their kindred, if the latter should come one day to attack Egypt. Moses does not speak of these facts, because he had no object to attain in making known the reasons which the Pharaohs had for persecuting his brethren. To attain his end, he had to expose the grievances of the Israelites against the Egyptians, not those of the Egyptians against the Israelites. Therefore, he speaks as he ought to speak, but the history of Egypt completes for us what he passed over in silence, and by revealing to us what did not enter his plan to relate, it shows us how everything in the sacred account is in agreement with the original documents.

M. Reuss continues: "And from a man raised at the King's court, we might have expected either a more exact knowledge of history, or more precise accounts of the proper names and of the situation. There is continually question of King Pharaoh, of the one whose daughter received the child from out of the river, or of the one before whom the old man presented himself to ask for the freedom of his people. The author feels not the least need to distinguish by their names

such important personages. The notice of the coming on of *another* king who knew not Joseph, the mention of two cities (or warehouses) which a numberless population should have been obliged to build, and what is said of the manufacturing of bricks, all this is not exactly the indication of an immediate witness." (*Opus cit.*)

Let us remark, in the first place, that it is false to say that Exodus calls the king of Egypt "King Pharaoh." Never are these two names joined, never is the title "Pharaoh" given as a proper name. When the text designates the Pharaoh by his title and never otherwise, it is easy to find therein the explanation: It is because the Israelites always called him thus and because Moses wrote especially for them. Still to-day, in our country, the man placed at the head of a State is he not almost always called "the Governor"? Many people do not trouble themselves to know his proper name. It was the same for the Pharaoh among the children of Jacob; most of them ignored the list of the pompous and complicated names which the sovereigns extolled in their formularies, and Moses had no reason to make them known to them; for them it was simply the Pharaoh. Especially when there is question of the reigning king, contemporaries "do not feel the least need to distinguish him by his proper name," because then all mistake is impossible.

Besides, it is wrong for Reuss to insinuate that the teachings of Exodus are always without precision in regard to proper names. Just as Genesis makes known to us these names, whenever it is necessary, for instance, Putiphar, master of Joseph, and Aseneth, his wife, daughter of another Putiphar, priest of On, so also Exodus names us the two midwives, Sephora and Phua, who refused to execute the barbarous orders of the Egyptian sovereign, as well as the two cities in which the Hebrews were forced to labor—Ramses and Pithom.

If Moses speaks of the persecutor of the Hebrews only under the title of Pharaoh, he describes him at least in traits characteristic enough for the Egyptologists to recognize him and see in him Ramses II., the conqueror so well known under the name of Seostris. This terrible monarch, who so cruelly persecuted the Hebrews and before whom Moses had to fly, we know through the numerous monuments with which he covered Egypt, through his numerous statues, and even to-day from the photography of his mummy

which, after many vicissitudes, has reached the Museum of Gizéh, where it is now exposed to the view of all visitors.

The new critic of the Pentateuch is really unfortunate when he reproaches Moses with not having "a more exact knowledge of history." M. Reuss wrote these words in 1879. In 1883 Edward Naville executed diggings, for the "Egyptian Exploration Fund," in the midst of the ruins of one of those cities built by the Israelites. He discovered Pithom (*Pi-Tum*), "the dwelling of the god Tum," and he established the fact that all the details which Exodus gives are of the most minute exactitude, such as an "immediate witness" alone could give, either as to the character of these two cities, which were at the same time warehouses of supply, as we can conclude from the Book of Kings (Ex. i. 11; cf. III. Ki. ix. 19; II. Par. viii. 4), or as to the manufacture of bricks which bear the likeness of Ramses II., the persecutor of the Hebrews, and which are exactly composed as Moses describes them. (See E. Naville, "The Store-City of Pithom," London, 1885.) The diggings of E. Naville prove the exactitude of the account of Exodus in such a conclusive manner that a German critic, Ed. Meyer, more incredulous, however, than Reuss himself, because he refuses to believe against all evidence that the Israelites were ever in Egypt, is nevertheless forced to make the following avowal: "The very instructive results of the diggings of Ed. Naville at Tell-el-Maskhûta, that is, at Pithom, prove anew, according to my opinion, that the Israelitish author of primitive history was very well acquainted with the things of Egypt." Because Mr. Meyer knows the Nile valley and its monuments he renders this forced testimony to the author of the Pentateuch. All those who have studied the history of Egypt are obliged to express themselves in an analogous manner; but Reuss, carried away by his preconceived ideas, sees difficulties where the Egyptologists behold, on the contrary, confirmations of the exactitude of the sacred account. He says:—

"The account of Exodus proves not quite a correct notion of the situation of the Israelites in Egypt, in the epoch when Moses placed himself at their head. In saying that the newborn male children were to be drowned immediately (Ex. i. 22) by the Egyptians, the narrator supposes that the Israelites were all dwelling on the shores of the Nile, not only in the midst of the people of the country, but even in the city where the king resided, because whilst going to

bathe, the princess discovers the child exposed near the dwelling of its parents (Ex. ii. 5). Other passages confirm this view. The Egyptians are the neighbors of the Israelites, in the strictest sense of the word (Ex. xi. 2). There are some who live with them under the same roof (Ex. iii. 22), so closely that, on the night of their departure, the emigrants can borrow from the natives valuable objects (Ex. xii. 35). In every case they live in houses provided with doors and lintels (Ex. xii. 21, etc.), and these houses are situated here and there among those of the Egyptians, for they must be marked with the blood of the paschal lamb, in order that the exterminator, in going through the city, may distinguish them from the others. But, if such is the case, what idea shall we form of the city where several millions were living, conjointly with an indigenous population that cannot have been inferior in number, if the attempt was made to put into execution all the measures of rigor and of cruelty known to us?" (*Opus cit.*)

Indeed, there was not in Egypt a city containing several millions of people, nor does the Bible tell us so. Mr. Reuss makes it say many things which it does not say; he interprets it badly, and when he does not attribute to it a false sense, he deceives himself about Egypt, of whose history and geography he knows very little. Thus, Moses does not suppose "that all the Israelites were settled on the shores of the Nile," but he supposes, and with good reason, that there were everywhere canals running from the Nile (Ex. vii. 19), which served for the irrigation of the lands, and which also served, in times of persecution, for the destruction of the newborn babes. If Mr. Reuss had studied the labors of the Egyptologists, in order to attack the Pentateuch with a thorough knowledge of the matter, he would have read that Ramses II. had repaired, in the country of Gessen, a canal of which the hieroglyphic texts speak and whose remains have been discovered in our day. It connected the Nile with Lake Timsah, and it crossed the very country which the Hebrews inhabited. The Papyri describe to us the city of Ramses, *Pa-Ramessu da-naht*, and they speak of fishes they caught in the waters that irrigate it, although this city was not on the shore of the Nile.

Far from supposing that all the Hebrews lived in one place, the text indicates clearly—and the commentators always understood it thus—that the children of Israel were spread over different

places. All that the Book of Exodus tells us of their extraordinary number and multiplication proves this superabundantly, and it needs all the partisan spirit of infidelity, always disposed to discover in Scripture things impossible and indefensible, to imagine an apparent explanation: "At the departure they (the Israelites) sighed after the flesh-pots they had in Egypt (Ex. xvi. 3), and they found their situation, in regard to nourishment, worse than death. Why have we no meat? they cried out (Num. xi. 4); and Moses lamented with the rest (xi. 13). But whence the meat they had in Egypt? From their flocks, undoubtedly. Well, these flocks were with them, and quite numerous (xxxii. 1). And in spite of their bitter regrets, they are ready to immolate as sacrifices a numberless quantity of cattle" (Ex. xxix. 38, etc.).

"Whence the meat they had in Egypt?" asks Reuss. And he answers: "From their herds, undoubtedly." In this he is mistaken. Here, as in many other places, the critic does not sufficiently know the Egyptian usages, nor even the customs of the nomadic shepherds, and hence the error. The flesh-meat which the Israelites regretted was that of those numberless birds which swarm on the shores of the Nile and the numerous canals. We often see them figured on the Egyptian monuments, which serve us here as illustration and commentary. All those who know the habits of shepherd-peoples, know very well that they live principally on milk-food and that they eat the flesh of their sheep only in very exceptional circumstances. In Egypt the children of Jacob must have eaten very little of what we call butcher-meat, but sometimes they held a banquet whereat they served venison and fowl. It was this that they regret in the desert, where their eyes, they say, behold nothing but the manna. The proof that it was neither oxen nor sheep which they regretted is clear from the manner in which God caused their murmurs to cease. He sends them quails, not herds of cattle.

Besides, we must not forget that the Hebrews did not complain only of having no longer kettles full of flesh-meat as they had in the Nile valley; they are also afflicted because they are deprived of the vegetables of Egypt, of the onions and leeks, which were, in truth, the favorite food of the Egyptians, as can be seen by the figured monuments on which they are so often represented. The Israelites were deprived of these in the desert. What more natural

than to regret them when the provisions became short? This example, far from being improbable, is, on the contrary, like so many others, a striking confirmation of the perfect knowledge which the author of the Pentateuch had of Egypt. How could an author living in Palestine, several centuries after these events, have known so well the tastes of the inhabitants of the Nile valley? The figured monuments, here as elsewhere, show us the exactitude of the graphic picture of Exodus, and since we meet everywhere the exactitude which we remark here, we have a perfect right to conclude that the painter saw the places which he so perfectly described, and that he lived in the midst of those whose peculiar customs and usages are so familiar and so well known to him. The progress of Egyptian archæology, far from pointing out errors in the accounts of Moses, has, on the contrary, caused forever to disappear difficulties which had no other foundation than ignorance; all the modern discoveries are a striking confirmation of the veracity of the sacred history.

But we cannot enter into the details of all the more or less minute objections raised by Reuss or his rivals on the subject of the historic character of Exodus. We are going to add only a few words on the Tabernacle, which the new school is not ashamed to treat as fabulous.

II. THE EXISTENCE OF THE TABERNACLE.—The needs of their cause have obliged Rationalists to deny the existence of the Tabernacle, and to pretend that all we read in regard to the subject in Exodus is a pure fiction. This is why they have been led, or rather constrained, to deny its history. The Temple of Jerusalem and the Tabernacle have traits of resemblance so striking that it is impossible to disown them; the same disposition, the same arrangements, the same sacred implements, and the same proportions in the measurements, with the sole difference that, the Temple of Jerusalem being a stable building, which was to be built of stone, not of wood, and in larger proportions, all the dimensions are doubled. Historically, these resemblances explain themselves without difficulty and in the most simple and most natural manner: Salomon built the portable temple of the desert of solid material at Jerusalem. But we cannot accept this venerable explanation, and confirmed by the texts without admitting that the Pentateuch existed before Salomon. Now, since it is this which they do not

wish to admit at any price, they seek, for reasons the most futile, to overthrow the two terms of comparison and to pretend that it is not the Tabernacle that preceded the Temple and served as its model, but that the Temple preceded the Tabernacle and gave rise to its idea.

Here are the proofs which they allege to establish that the Tabernacle never existed: It is only a "childish imagination," worthy of the "pleasantries of Voltaire"; its conception supposes "the absolute contempt of the reality"; its "stock of tools is ridiculous"; the whole is in the mind of Ezechiel, the man with the "plans that cannot be carried out and with the visionary combinations."

Are these big words arguments? Will it be sufficient for the infidel, who refuses to believe in the existence of the great Pyramid, to affirm that this building is the invention of a childish imagination, and there is nothing real? That evidently it is an illusion to suppose a mass of stone about 700 feet wide, 430 feet high, forming a whole of 78,000,000 cubic feet, and destined to serve as a tomb for one man? The monument of Cheops will, nevertheless, always be a reality, always existing. The Tabernacle of Israel differs from it inasmuch as it no longer exists, but it differs also from it in this that it was of a much easier execution, and at the same time more reasonable.

In fact, what is more natural for a religious people like the children of Jacob than to desire to have a tent which served to them as a temple, and which partly replaced those sumptuous temples which they admired in Egypt? What is easier than to satisfy their desire? Living themselves under the tent, accustomed, like all the nomads, to see their chief living in a larger and more ornamented tent than those of the other members of the tribe, they were led on by the very circumstances to erect the Tabernacle in honor of Jehovah and to adorn it with all the magnificence of which they were capable. They speak to us of impossibilities. Where are they? The dwelling of the Lord, although greater (as was becoming to His majesty, was composed of the same material as that of His adorers; if we except some planks of acacia, it hardly distinguished itself except by its dimensions, the richness of the tapestries and colors); when they changed camp they carried it along like the other tents, except with more respect. What is there chimerical in all this?

They assure us with affirmations and without giving the least

positive proof, as we have seen, that the Temple of Salomon was the prototype of the Tabernacle attributed to Moses. How then does it happen that all the books of the Old Testament teach us the contrary? The authors of the Pentateuch, they say, have invented the Tabernacle with all its pieces. But if it had existed only in their imagination, how could they take the risk of making it play such an important part in the Sacred History? The Pentateuch, we can say, is full of the Tabernacle, beginning with Exodus. It is not only once or twice that there is mention made of it, but a number of times. Before the erection of the definitive Tabernacle there had been a provisory Tabernacle (Ex. xxxiii. 7; cf. xxxv. 10-11). For what end could the latter have been imagined by the last Jewish writers? After the portable temple had been built, it was associated with every event and its name recurs on all the pages of Leviticus and Numbers, as in the last chapters of Exodus.

In the Book of Josue, the Tabernacle occupies the same place as in the last books of the Pentateuch. It is with the Ark at Galgala, at the foot of Mount Hebal and Mount Garizim; in the general quarter, at Galgala again; and when the conquest of the Promised Land is completed, it is erected at Silo, which from this time became, so to say, the spiritual capital of Palestine, until that of Jerusalem, the place of gathering of all the children of Israel (Jos. iv. 19; viii. 30-35; ix. 6, 27; etc.). Then it is sometimes called the dwelling or the house of God, which name had been given to it already in Exodus (xxiii. 19; xxxiv. 26; Jos. ix. 23).

Rationalists refuse, indeed, these testimonies of the Pentateuch and of Josue, whatever may be their number and their value. However, they cannot help acknowledging the antiquity of the Book of Judges and of the books of Samuel, that is, the historical writings which we call the first two books of Kings. Well then, these books suppose the existence of the Tabernacle by speaking of it as of a thing as well known by the Hebrews then as they knew later on the Temple of Jerusalem. The history of the Judges is a political history and not a religious history; consequently it has little occasion to speak of facts which directly interest religion; nevertheless, it mentions the presence of the Tabernacle at Silo, which place it calls the house of God (Jud. xviii. 31; xx. 18). The capture of the Ark by the Philistines in Heli's time was a fatal stroke for the Tabernacle, which found itself robbed, so to say,

of its most precious treasure, but it was especially the building of the Temple of Jerusalem which, by rendering it useless, caused the Israelites to forget it (cf. II. Ki. vi. 17; III. Ki. viii, 4). What is there in all this very improbable and incredible?

The great argument upon which they have insisted in order to treat the Tabernacle as a fiction, is that it would have been impossible to build it in the desert of Sinai. Now, nothing is more contrary to truth, and nothing shows better the veracity of the sacred historian than the details which he gives us about the construction of the divine tent. These details indicate a perfect knowledge of Sinai and of its resources, and never could a Jewish writer, living several centuries after the exodus, have imagined a tabernacle built as was that of Moses.

The sacred writer tells us that the solid part of the Tabernacle and the furniture destined for worship were constructed of *sittim* wood, that is, a species of acacia. An author who would have written in Palestine never would have supposed this, for the reason that they did not make use of this wood in the interior of Chanaan, where they did not find it. The peninsula of Sinai hardly produces more than three kinds of trees: the palm-tree, the tamarisk, and the acacia. Of these three kinds, the first two are unfit for carpenter's work; the acacia, on the contrary, possesses all the qualities Moses could desire for the use he intended to make of it. Its wood is excellent as plank; it is, moreover, very light, an inestimable quality for the Israelites, who were obliged to carry along the planks of the Tabernacle every time they changed camp. In spite of its light weight, it is very hard and very durable. Finally, in growing older it turns darker and takes a kind of ebony color; hence it could serve for the manufacture of very beautiful furniture, as the Hebrews used it in the desert for the uses of worship.

The employment of acacia in the desert of Sinai, therefore, confirms the exactitude of the accounts of Exodus. We find another confirmation of the veracity of the sacred historian in an analogous detail which also refers to the Tabernacle. We read in Exodus that they covered the Tabernacle with skins of *tahas*, a word which they to-day generally accept as meaning the dugong (Ex. xxv. 5). This cetacea is common in the Red Sea; it is found there in shoals; the Israelites could easily fish for it in this place, which they could not do in Palestine.

A last objection is made against the building of the Tabernacle and its accessories. These are, they claim, works of art which it was impossible to manufacture in the desert. However, these works of art explain themselves very easily. Let us listen to M. François Lenormant :—

“One is often astonished at the magnificence of the Tabernacle, such as it is described in the Book of Exodus, and especially at the enormous metallurgic works which their execution required. Similar works could not be produced by a people composed of nomadic shepherds dwelling in tents; they required perfected tools, fixed and extensive establishments. Anti-religious criticism, therefore, did not fail to draw from this an objection in order to tax the Sacred Books with exaggerations and even with lies, and to say that the works of the Tabernacle must be relegated into the domain of fables. But to-day these objections crumble before the progress of knowledge, and the veracity of the divine books shows itself as brilliantly as in all the other accounts. The most recent explorers of Arabia Petræa have found in the woods of Sinai, quite near the place where the Hebrews sojourned, under the leadership of Moses, the two years which the labors of the Tabernacle required, in a place now called Wady-Magharah, important copper mines worked by the Egyptians since the times of their most ancient dynasties, and the remains, still perfectly recognizable, of large metallurgic factories which they had founded there. Inscriptions abound in these mines. Hence it becomes very evident that the Israelites, when they had once arrived at Sinai and wished to execute the necessary objects for their worship, took hold of the foundries of Wady-Magharah and very probably employed Egyptian laborers under the direction of overseers which the Bible mentions. It was there undoubtedly that Aaron manufactured the golden calf; it was there that, with the furnaces established by the order of the Pharaohs and with the stock of tools that belonged to them, Beseleel and Ooliab cast the numerous objects of gold and bronze which formed the furniture of the Tabernacle.” (*Manuel d'Histoire Ancienne de l'Orient.*)



CHAPTER X

*REPETITIONS CONTAINED IN THE LAST FOUR BOOKS
OF THE PENTATEUCH*

I. REPETITION OF FACTS.—Rationalists attack not only on the ground of improbability the facts related in the four last books of the Pentateuch; they also pretend to shake its credibility, supporting themselves upon the repetitions contained in the Mosaic narrative.

We are going to show that there are no contradictions in these repetitions. It will be impossible to enter into discussion of all the small repetitions that have been pointed out by the critics; this labor would be endless and as tedious as it is useless; but we shall not omit the discussion of any important repetition. In regard to those which we shall not study *ex professo*, let us content ourselves by remarking that, if several among them are real, they can be readily explained by the very manner in which the Pentateuch was drawn up and the law given. Mr. Reuss is in agreement with this, although, in his system and in seeking to support himself upon other reasons, he denies the Mosaic origin of the law: "We could admit," he says, "that in a space of time which has not lasted long enough, many a prescription might have been inculcated repeatedly, or, indeed, changed according to the needs of the moment, or in consequence of a more exact appreciation of the means of execution." "Undoubtedly there is nothing to hinder a book composed by one author from containing repetitions," Kuenen says. In fact, in all the literatures, we find histories containing repetitions, sometimes very numerous. Therefore, the repetitions of themselves prove nothing; it is only from the manner in which they are presented that one might draw arguments against the veracity of the historian.

Hence let us examine the principal repetitions to which the critics attach importance. In the first place we have to remark that in reality they are not very numerous in the last four books of the Pentateuch. The infidels have succeeded in finding from four to five, and even this number is exaggerated, because they regard wrongfully as repetitions, analogous facts which took place in diverse circumstances and epochs.

The first fact which they claim to be related twice in Exodus is that of the double divine apparition in which the Lord sends Moses to deliver his people from the bondage of Egypt (Ex. iii. and vi.). Now, it is sufficient to read attentively the two accounts to convince oneself that criticism is deceived by confounding them. In fact, they do not occur in the same place: the one at Sinai, the other in Egypt. Moreover, they are not accompanied by the same circumstances. In the country of Madian, God manifests Himself "out of the midst of the burning bush"; in the city of the Nile there is nothing similar. They are also as distinct as two events, of which one is the sequel of the other, for the second presupposes the first; without the first, one could not explain how Moses left the desert to return into Egypt, from whence he had formerly fled. The reason of his journey is given to us by the vision of Horeb. The Lord, by telling his messenger: *Thou shalt see what I will do to Pharaoh*, gives us to understand that a first fruitless proceeding had been tried with the monarch, by repeating to him: *I am Jehovah, my name is Jehovah*. He shows us that He had explained to him before the meaning of this august name. The remark that the Israelites "did not listen to Moses on account of their anguish and hard labor" implies also that their oppression had become aggravated, for their very affliction was before a motive to listen to the one that spoke to them of deliverance; because these suggestions served only to render their state more deplorable, they no longer wished to listen to him.

But, insist infidel critics, Moses, in the two accounts, gives the same reason for declining the divine mission, namely, that he is "of uncircumcised lips," that is, without eloquence. That he did allege this excuse a first time, we can understand; that he repeated it a second time, when his brother Aaron had been given to him as interpreter, is quite improbable.

Rationalists draw from this circumstance a too general conclusion, even if their reasoning were correct. Since the two facts are distinct, it might follow at the most that this incident, or detail, has been improperly added, and we would not have the right to infer from it that the two apparitions form only one. But it is very easy to explain why Moses repeats an excuse which he had already given: because he judged it good. The mission with which he was charged was a difficult, painful, and dangerous one; hence it was quite natural

that he should be reluctant to accept it, and, in similar cases, to whom does it not happen to repeat the same reasons? That of Moses was well founded; God acknowledges this, because He gives to him his brother as spokesman; but in spite of the help of Aaron, might not the divine messenger believe that the impossibility to speak himself was one obstacle more for the fulfillment of his work, because to speak for oneself is worth more than to make use of the mouth of another? This detail is therefore not conclusive at all. Moreover, Moses insists thereon because he wishes to show clearly to his people that he was forced, and that in spite of himself he accepted a mission which became for him the source of so many vexations and troubles.

Another repetition, to believe the critics, would be found in the Book of Numbers, which is claimed to report a fact already related in Exodus (Num. xi. 9-17; Ex. xviii.). In the latter book, Jethro advises his son-in-law not to judge himself any longer the many differences that arise among the people, but to entrust this care to prudent and wise men, reserving for himself only the most grievous and most important cases. Moses follows this advice. Later on, feeling himself oppressed anew by the weight of the affairs still left to him, the legislator of Israel takes, on the order of God, seventy assistants, the Book of Numbers tells us. These seventy assistants, according to criticism, are only the wise men of which Jethro had spoken.

One must be as blind as rationalism is, to confound two such distinct facts. They take place at different times, the first shortly after the departure from Egypt, the second one year later. The occasion is not the same. In the former, it is the unexpected arrival of Jethro, who, as witness of the too numerous affairs which Moses had to judge during the entire day, induces his son-in-law to associate judges. In the other, Jethro does not figure at all. That which leads to the institution of the seventy auxiliaries of Moses, is not the excessive burden of judicial causes, but a revolt caused by the disgust which the people show towards the manna. The Israelites, tired of this nourishment, always the same, cry aloud for flesh-meat. Moses, being unable to endure any longer the repeated murmurs of those he had drawn out of Egypt, prays to God to free him from the burden. The Lord does not yield to his prayer, but, to lighten it, He gives a part of His spirit "to the

seventy ancients of Israel." None of these details contained in the Book of Numbers are found in Exodus. The two episodes are therefore completely different.

The third fact which they assure us to be related twice is that of the murmurs of the people against Moses, and the sending of quails, on account of the scarcity of provisions. Indeed, there is question each time of murmurs and of the sending of the same birds, but in two quite different circumstances and epochs. The first time, it was *on the fifteenth day of the second month, after they came out of the land of Egypt*, in the desert of Sin, *which is between Elim and Sinai*, and the people complain because they have nothing to eat, whilst *in Egypt they sat over the flesh-pots and ate bread to the full* (Ex. xvi. 1-15). God sent them quails on the same evening and manna on the next day. At the second sending of quails, more than one year had elapsed since the departure from Egypt (Num. x. 11). The scene takes place in the desert of Pharan, not in that of Sin (x. 12). The people do not murmur because they are in want of provisions, like the first time, but because they are disgusted with the manna. *Our eyes behold nothing else but manna! . . . Who shall give us flesh to eat?* (xi. 4-6). God sends them such an abundance of quails that they have not only enough of them for one meal, as was the case in the desert of Sin, but for an entire month (xi. 19-20). Can one imagine two more distinct facts? Besides we know that the passages of quails are nearly regular in the peninsula of Sinai. They generally emigrate in March and April. To-day they are making them the object of quite a business. They capture them in great numbers in Egypt with the help of nets, and ship them alive in cages to Marseilles and from there to London, where the English use them for food, as formerly the Israelites did at Sinai.

The fourth repetition which criticism points out in the last books of the Pentateuch is the following: God, irritated by the continual murmurs of the people, wishes to destroy them by the pest. Moses intercedes for his brethren and obtains the grace which he solicits with about the following restriction: *All the men that have seen my majesty, and the signs that I have done in Egypt, and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now ten times, and have not obeyed my voice, shall not see the land for which I swore to their fathers to give to them* (Num. xiv. 22-23). Caleb alone is excepted from this sentence of death. The words just quoted are addressed to

Moses. It is the wish of the Lord that they should be made known to the people, and He orders Moses and Aaron to do this. For this purpose He repeats to both of them His sentence, but more specifically: *Say to them. . . . In the wilderness shall your carcases lie. All you that were numbered from twenty years old and upward, and have murmured against me, shall not enter into the land, . . . except Caleb the son of Jephone, and Josue the son of Nun*, etc. (Num. xiv. 28-30). We have here a repetition, it is true, but it is natural and has a motive. Besides the new details which it adds, it has for its end to make the Hebrews feel more keenly the unworthiness of their conduct, and to show them that the chastisement with which the Lord threatens them is inevitable.

Critics also quote as being related twice, once in Exodus and the other time in Numbers (Ex. xvii. 1-7; Num. xx. 1-13), the miracle of the miraculous water. In these two places the people complain that they are in want of water, and Moses procures it for them in a supernatural manner by striking a rock. For the Rationalists, this is one and the same miracle.

What is there astonishing, first, that the Israelites were twice in want of water in a dry desert; that those who suffered from thirst did murmur a second time; and that God wrought a similar miracle on two similar occasions? Besides, whatever may be the analogy of this double prodigy, the sacred text shows clearly that there is question of two very distinct facts. The one takes place near Raphidim, the other at Cades. Here Moses, hesitating in his faith, strikes the rock twice; there, only once, without mistrust. The rock near Raphidim is called Horeb; that of Cades has no name; the latter place was called *Meribáh* in commemoration of the event that took place there; the former had been called *Massáh Meribáh*—"Temptation of strife." The two denominations are alike, but both are mentioned because they are significant and recall to mind what passed in these places. There are two *Meribáh*, in different parts of the peninsula of Sinai, because there have been two popular revolts in the peninsula of Sinai.

Finally, the last repetition which the critics point out as important is that of the two canticles of Moses in Deuteronomy (xxxii. and xxxiii.).—How can one confound two poems, one of which chants the praises of God, the benefactor of His people, and the

other blesses each of the tribes of Israel, as the dying Jacob had done? This pretended repetition explains itself.

It really needs all the partisan spirit of rationalism to have recourse to such objections against the veracity of the Pentateuch. Its followers reproach believers with supporting their faith upon arguments without value. What are they themselves doing, and how easy would it be to retort against them! Only by declaring ourselves satisfied with the most superficial analogies can we accept the identities established by the free-thinking exegetists among the facts which we have related. We have discussed all the pretended contradictions which they point out as important. Everyone must be convinced that all the events which they claim to be reported twice in a contradictory manner are as distinct in time, place, and circumstances as are, for instance, two victories of Napoleon I., where we find certain common traits, but which nobody, however, thinks of confounding.

II. REPETITION OF LAWS.—The repetitions which rationalistic criticism alleges against the veracity of the Pentateuch it also alleges in regard to the Law, in order to maintain that this law is not from the time of Moses, but from diverse and more recent epochs. It cannot help rendering homage to the superiority of the Mosaic legislation over all the ancient legislations, but, in spite of this quality, the Hebrew legislation is far from being perfect in the eyes of infidels; they make the attempt to point out defects, and even errors, which we have to examine, after having spoken of the repetitions and contradictions which they pretend to discover therein.

The rationalistic criticism insists a good deal on the repetition of certain prescriptions in the last books of the Pentateuch. "Nearly all the important laws," says Renan, "are reproduced thrice: a first time in their antique form (Book of the Covenant, or Decalogue), then in the deuteronomic form, then in the levitic or sacerdotal form. The Decalogue itself, which was taken up again by Deuteronomy; was taken up again twice or three times by the sacerdotal rehandlers. . . . We have in chapter xxxiv. of Exodus a group of diverse prescriptions which are found already in the collection of chapters xxi-xxiii. . . ."

We may remark, first, that these very repetitions clearly prove that the Pentateuch did not pass through the hand of editors and harmonists, as the critics pretend, for they would have fused the

incongruous parts and avoided the repetitions. It is true, however, that the repetitions exist, but generally they can be explained without difficulty. In order to account for that which concerns the laws of Exodus we need only recall to mind, what criticism forgets, that between the chapters xxi. and xxxiv. the sacred author relates a grave event: the violation, on the part of the people, of the covenant they had concluded with Jehovah. Hardly had the people of Israel promised fidelity to God when they committed perjury in adoring an idol, the golden calf. God, irritated, desires to destroy the unfaithful. Moses pleads for mercy, obtains it, and then the covenant is renewed. Therefore, the historian simply follows the course of the events, and the repetitions of the account are only, if we may speak thus, the counter-drawing of the facts whose importance justifies the repetition. Exodus, being, like Leviticus and Numbers, a sort of journal or account from day to day, had to reproduce the like facts, which transpired at some distance from one another, as our own journals do. All this is natural in a contemporary writing of this kind, while it would be inexplicable in a work written several centuries afterwards.

However, most of the repetitions are found in Deuteronomy, and there they are necessary, because this book is a recapitulation and a summary of the laws previously given by Moses. The liberator of Israel had to reproduce therein all the prescriptions which he judged proper to call to the mind of the new generation of his people. Moreover, he had to profit by this circumstance to introduce the changes and modifications which the new situation of the Hebrews or other particular reasons might suggest to him as advantageous, and this explains to us what are wrongfully sought to be presented as contradictions in the Jewish code, and as the work of different legislators. With much more reason could Moses, in Deuteronomy, express himself in another manner than in the preceding books.

Mr. Reuss pretends that the two passages of the Pentateuch containing the Decalogue (Ex. xx. and Deut. v.) are not by the same author, on account of certain different readings in the compilation (as if the same author could not express the same thing in somewhat different terms), but especially on account of "the difference of reasons by which the commandment in regard to the day of rest is explained in the texts. Exodus founds the institu-

tion of the Sabbath on the history of creation, such as it is related in the first chapter of Genesis. Deuteronomy, on the contrary, explains it as perpetuating the remembrance of the bondage of Egypt." We may justly answer that the one does not exclude the other; Moses could very well give a true reason in the first case and another true reason in the second. On the other hand, we have to remark that Reuss does not present the facts in quite an exact manner. Deuteronomy makes allusion to the creation of the world, although less explicitly than Exodus, by reminding us that the Sabbath is the day "of rest of the Lord" (Deut. v. 14), which can be explained only by the account of the creation in Genesis (ii. 2-3). When he speaks also of Egypt, it is less to justify thereby the institution of the Sabbath, which must be anterior to the bondage of Egypt, than to explain one of the prescriptions of the Sabbathic law, namely, that which renders the abstaining from servile works obligatory for the slaves as well as for the masters (Deut. v. 14-15). The slaves of the Israelites should enjoy the rest of which their masters had been deprived in Egypt.

III. PRETENDED CONTRADICTIONS OF THE MOSAIC LAWS.—Negative criticism reproaches the laws of the Pentateuch with a more serious defect than that of repeating themselves, namely, that of contradicting themselves. Let us listen to Mr. Kuenen: "There are positive contradictions in the laws which are contained in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers. Let us hasten to say that they are not all of the same kind. Sometimes they are only apparent. In this case, they disappear before a careful exegetist. But often these contradictions are palpable. After all, apparent or real, these contradictions are found not only in one book, but in three books, which prove that the so-called Mosaic legislation is the work of very different persons and epochs." (*Kritische Geschichte der Bücher des A. T.*)

Let us remark, in the first place, before entering into the details of the alleged contradictions, that the principle thus set forth and the conclusion drawn from it are not correct. If there were real contradictions in the Mosaic law, it would not follow at all from this that it is not from one and the same author. The same legislator can abrogate what he had already prescribed and promulgate a new and different law; then there is no real contradiction. But he may formally contradict himself; this is the lot of humanity,

and history furnishes numerous proofs of this. But let us inquire whether there are any contradictions. Here are those which Kuenen assumes to discover:—

Laws on Ransom.—“The first-born of unclean animals were to be redeemed, according to Exodus (xiii. 13; xxxiv. 20), by a sheep; according to Numbers (xviii. 15–16), by five sicles of silver; according to Leviticus (xxvii. 27), by the price at which they shall have been estimated and an additional sum equivalent to one-fifth of this price.”

There is no contradiction in these different prescriptions. Exodus, in the first passage, speaks only of the ass, which, being the most common of unclean animals, is especially mentioned. Mr. Kuenen is obliged to admit this himself: “There is at least question of every first brood of the asses,” he says. There is question only of this. In the second passage of Exodus the same law is repeated, but with the explanation that one can give its value in silver instead of a sheep. Leviticus tells us in a general manner that every unclean animal can be redeemed by paying its appraised value and one-fifth more; this is the law which we read at the end of Exodus, expressed in more explicit terms, to cut short all contention. As to the fixing of five sicles for the ransom of the first-born, as we read in Numbers, the Leyden professor wrongfully applies it to unclean animals. The legislator, according to the general explanation, regulates in this place the ransom of children who were redeemed at the end of one month, whilst the animals were redeemed at the end of eight days. Therefore, there is no contradiction here, because there is question of different things.

Laws Relating to Slavery Among the Hebrews.—“Exodus (xxi. 1–6) would have the manumission of the Hebrew slave take place after he shall have served six years. In Leviticus (xxv. 39–43) the rule is that the slave ought to be set free only within the jubilee year.”

Mr. Kuenen arranges the text of Leviticus to suit his purpose, and thus to place it in contradiction with that of Exodus. Leviticus does not say that the slave shall be set free *only* within the jubilee year; it merely says, whilst occupying itself with the consequences of the jubilee year, that the slave should be set at liberty within this year, even when he has not completed the six years fixed in Exodus.

Laws on the Time of Service of the Levites.—“Here the contradiction is found in one and the same book. In one chapter of the Book of Numbers the time of service commences for the Levites in their thirtieth year; in the other, in their twenty-fifth year” (Num. iv. 3-47; viii. 24).

Here is the answer made long ago by Calmet to this objection: “Moses speaks here (in the first passage) of the Levites who were employed to carry the vessels of the Tabernacle on the march; this required a good deal of strength and maturity; whereas, in the second passage, he speaks of the duties of the Levites in general, of the services which they could render at the Tabernacle to the priests and the other older Levites. He says that they may serve, beginning with the age of twenty-five years, in these minor employments; but he obliges them to carry the burdens in the encampments only when they have attained the age of thirty years.”

IV. REASONS FOR THE DISTINCTION OF CLEAN AND UNCLEAN ANIMALS.—The prescriptions of Moses concerning the animals whose flesh it was permitted or forbidden to eat, have been the object of numerous mockeries and attacks of all kinds. Some have believed that the distinction of clean and unclean animals was without foundation, or they pretended that it was founded upon wrong ideas and errors arising from the ignorance of natural history. How could God prohibit, they asked, the eating of fishes without scales, of the hare, the hedgehog, and the owl? Because there were just reasons for doing so. Without having recourse to the moral considerations of a superior order, which have sometimes been invoked in order to defend the rules established by Moses, let it suffice to remark that these regulations are explained by the local circumstances, and that the interests of public hygiene rendered them necessary. The most competent men have established this fact, and medical science justifies the prescriptions of Moses in regard to the food of the Israelites. Experience had taught the Orientals that certain meats were hurtful or dangerous in their climate. That which Moses had ordained was so wise that Mohammed did not hesitate to appropriate it largely in the Koran, and even to-day, travelers who have visited Palestine recommend to those going there to abstain from the flesh of the animals prohibited by the Hebrew code.

Circumcision.—Let us say a few words on the subject of Circumcision. Although it was the sign of the covenant between

God and His people, and had been raised thereby to the height of a religious and sacred rite, it seems to have had at the same time a hygienic virtue, which might have been the reason of the choice of this exterior mark of the union of Israel with Jehovah. This is the very explicit opinion of various physicians who have studied the question *ex professo*.

Thus all the objections raised against the Mosaic law are without foundation, and, by the very insignificance of the most of them, we can judge of the excellence of a legislation against which the most subtile and the most minute criticism has nothing serious to allege, in spite of the fact that it has been, for so many centuries, exposed to the attacks of all the enemies of revelation. All judicious and unprejudiced men have rendered homage to the wisdom of the prescriptions and to the excellence of the commandments contained in the Pentateuch. Moses, therefore, was perfectly right in telling his people: *O Israel, hear all the nations hearing of these ordinances will say: Behold a wise and understanding people. . . . For what other nation is there so renowned that hath ceremonies, and just judgments, and all the law, which I will set forth this day before your eyes?* (Deut. iv. 1, 6, 8.)

CHAPTER XI

THE EARTHLY PARADISE

THE traditions which the Bible has bequeathed to us, relative to the cradle of humanity, have been at all times the object of attacks by the enemies of faith. We do not need to discuss here the objections made to the history of Eden in the name of rationalistic philosophy, which rejects both the possibility of the miracle and the idea of an original Fall.

We will keep strictly to the biblical point of view, to refute another objection conceived about in the following terms: "The Bible gives, on the situation of Eden, quite precise geographical indications. Now, when we attempt, according to these accounts, to fix the site of Paradise, we find ourselves faced with all kinds of impossibilities; but if the Bible is deceived about the site of Eden it may also be deceived on its very existence."

To show the little value of this objection let us inquire first about the indications contained in Genesis: *A river went out of the place of pleasure to water paradise, which from thence is divided into four heads. The name of the one is Phison; that is it which compasseth all the land of Havilah, where gold groweth, and the gold of that land is very good; there also is found bdellium and the onyx (soham) stone. And the name of the second river is Gehon; the same is it that compasseth all the land of Ethiopia (Kusch). And the name of the third river is Tigris (Hiddekel); the same passeth along by Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates* (Gen. ii. 10-14). Even if, after these indications, it should be impossible to-day to assign a place to the earthly paradise, even if several systems imagined in regard to this subject are clearly erroneous, as appears to be the case, for instance, the hypothesis which places Eden in India, it would not follow that the biblical account is forged. We do not know the ancient geography well enough, especially that of so remote times, to have the right to be so assertive and to regard as false what we do not understand. But, indeed, several hypotheses imagined as to the site of Eden are possible, although more or less improbable, and it is sufficient that they are plausible for the refutation of the objections raised by the critics. Following is a concise review of these various systems:—

1. Henry Rawlinson places Eden in Babylonia, and for this he relies upon indigenous documents which call Babylonia *Gan Duniyas*, the inclosure of the God *Duniyas*, a name which resembles *Gan-Eden* (Garden of Eden) of Genesis. Rawlinson, being still more precise, indicates the city of Eridu as the site of Paradise. Indeed, we find in Chaldean hymns passages like these: "In Eridu a dark pine grew, in an illustrious place it was planted; its fruit was of white crystal. . . . In Eridu fruitful abundance of its plenitude; its seat is the (central) place of the earth." In this theory there is no difficulty in identifying the Tigris and Euphrates, two well-known rivers watering the plain of Babylon. As to the *Gehon*, it is the *Juha* that waters Eridu. Finally, the *Phison*, it is the stream called *Ugne*. This hypothesis, which is a revival of that of the learned Huet, has hardly any probability in its favor, as can be seen by the following theory; but, rigorously speaking, it is possible, and this is sufficient to show that the veracity of Genesis as to this point is scientifically unassailable.

2. Fr. Delitzsch also places the Eden in Babylonia, and he sees it in the centre of Babylon, called very anciently Tintira, *grove of life*. How does the learned Orientalist arrive at this result? For him, the Tigris and Euphrates named by Genesis are the two rivers of this name which water Babylonia. As to the Gehon and Phison, to succeed in identifying them, Delitzsch at first tries to identify the two countries which they water, Kusch and Havilah. *Kusch* is the Sumerian-Elamitic power which, three thousand years before Christ, dominated in central Babylonia; its name was Kassî or Kaschi, hence the ancient name of the Chaldeans, Kasda. As to *Havilah*, whose name signifies sandy land, it is that portion of the Syrian desert which limits the Euphrates: indeed, we find in this place the products mentioned by Genesis. Thus Havilah is on the western shore of the Euphrates and Kusch is on the eastern shore. Therefore, Eden can be only that plain which forms, so to say, a garden around Babylon. As to the Phison and Gehon, they are two of the canals surrounding Babylon, and probably two of the most important, the Pallacopas and the Schatt on the Nile. The latter canal was called in Sumerian Ka-hanna; now the sign which expresses *Ka* may also be translated by *Gu*; therefore, we can read instead of Kahan, Guhan, a name which sufficiently approaches *Gehon*. As to the Phison, neither Pallacopas nor any other canal has ever carried a name that resembles that of Phison; but canal in the Sumerian language is called *pisan*, and it may be that the Babylonians did preëminently call the Pallacopas *canal*, *pisan* (Phison). Finally, the word Eden is derived from the Sumerian *edin*, desert, which originally signified *depression* of ground.

This theory might be true without giving any one the right to conclude therefrom, with its author, that the account of Genesis is only a myth of Babylonian origin. But, in fact, it seems, if not impossible, at least very difficult to see in the Babylonian plain the *Eden* of Genesis: (1) When Genesis speaks of this plain, it calls it Sennaar and not Eden. (2) The indigenous documents give to the Babylonian plain neither the name of Eden nor any other that approaches it. (3) We see (Gen. xi.) that mankind, after the Deluge, finds a plain in the land of Sennaar where they establish themselves; this fact seems to indicate that the plain of Sennaar had been unknown to men until after the Deluge. (4) In the

Bible, the Phison and Gehon are the two most important rivers; in the theory of Delitzsch they hold only a secondary place and consist of simple canals. (5) If the word *Eden* in the Sumerian language signifies plain, it is in the sense of a dry plain or plateau and not a fruitful plain.

3. The most probable hypothesis is that which seeks the site of Eden at the sources of the Euphrates and Tigris, that is, in Armenia. Therefore, "the Phison is," says Vigouroux, "either the Phase of the ancients, which flows from east to west and empties into the Dead Sea, or the Kur, the Cyrus of the ancients, which takes its source in the neighborhood of Kars, not far from the western source of the Euphrates, and then empties into the Caspian Sea, after having mingled its water with that of the Araxes. Havilah, which the Phison waters, is Colchis, the country of precious metals, whither the Argonauts went to seek the golden fleece. As to the Gehon, it is the Aras of to-day, the ancient Araxes, called by the Arabs *Djaichum* (or Gehon) *er Ras*, which rises in the neighborhood of the eastern source of the Euphrates, and together with the Kur empties into the Caspian Sea. The land of Kusch through which it passes, according to Genesis, is the country of the Kosseans, *Casiotis*." One can allege nothing against this hypothesis, defended especially by Calmet; be it as it may, it is sufficient that it is probable to cut short of all attacks on the veracity of Genesis. Besides, the best constructed theory as to the subject of the site of Eden will probably always remain a hypothesis. Since the creation of man, certain portions of the earth have been overthrown, either by the Deluge or by other revolutions, and undoubtedly it entered the designs of divine Providence that the earthly Paradise should be comprised among these destructions: first, God caused it to be guarded by Cherubim; then He took care that His sentence was executed by a still more radical measure, namely, by rendering its site unrecognizable. Henceforth, men should pass the places where formerly the Garden of Eden was situated without being aware of doing so.

The traditions of the earthly Paradise have been preserved among many nations. Several of them locate the cradle of humanity among the high mountains of Central Asia, where the great Asiatic rivers have their sources. According to the Hindoos, the four or five great rivers rose towards the north of the sacred mountain, the Meru (Himalaya) or Pamir, to direct themselves towards different

points of the world. The ancient Iranians placed it in the North, on Mount Hukairya, one of the peaks of the sacred mountain, Hara-Baerezaiti, also called Albordji, whose summits reached unto heaven, to the revivifying waters of Ardvi-Cura, which had their source in heaven itself, thus obtaining the power to fructify the earth. The Chinese describe the cradle of mankind thus: "It is a mountain situated in the middle of the central plateau of Asia, forming part of the mountainous region of Kuen-Lun. In the midst of this mountain there is a garden where constantly a tender zephyr breathes and moves the leaves of the beautiful Tong. This delightful garden is situated close to the gates of heaven. The waters which furrow it proceed from a beautiful yellow source, called the source of immortality; those who drink thereof will never die. It branches off into four rivers flowing towards the north, west, south, and east. (Cf. Lücken, *Überlieferungen*, Vol. I., p. 100.)

CHAPTER XII

THE FALL AND ORIGINAL SIN

IN REGARD to the history of the temptation and the fall of our first parents, as related in Genesis iii., we must not be astonished when we find therein wonderful particulars. Man, according to the original design of the Creator, was not to have that unfortunate interior inclination towards evil which is our sad inheritance. And, nevertheless, God, having created him free, wished to try his fidelity. How could He try him, since neither Adam nor Eve felt the sting of concupiscence? He could do this only by permitting a foreign agent, the devil, to tempt them. But how could the devil, a pure spirit, tempt them, except by adopting a sensible form or by making use of an animate being? And, finally, how could God try the fidelity of His reasonable and free creature in a more natural, and, so to say, more logical manner, than by requiring from him an exterior act of obedience, easy in itself, consisting in not eating of a forbidden fruit, which the obedience due to the Creator forbade him to taste,

but for which every human passion aroused by the tempter, pride, sensuality, curiosity, the spirit of independence, prompted both the man and the woman to desire.

Hence Catholic tradition has not been unreasonable in taking the account of Genesis in the literal sense. With right has it believed that, since what precedes and follows this account is historical and not mythological, there was good reason to believe that the account itself is no myth, but the pure and simple expression of truth. As we shall see, in the next chapter, ancient traditions of mankind justify the general interpretation of the Church in regard to the subject in question. One objects, it is true, that all the primitive remembrances, among whatever people they may be, are allegorical and mythological, and that the Hebrew people cannot form an exception to the general rule. But we may ask: Why not? Because all religions boast of being true, does it follow that they are all false without exception? We expressly maintain that the Bible is not a book like the others, just as the Christian religion is not a religion like the others. We believe that Genesis alone gives us the explanation of the real origin of evil upon earth, whilst all other explanations conceived with great pains by the philosophers or invented spontaneously by popular imagination explain nothing.

Another reproach is made to Genesis: that of wounding the moral feeling in making us responsible for a fault which we have not committed. Certainly we have to admit that at first sight there is something mysterious, and even terrible, in this solidarity which renders us partially responsible, after so many elapsed generations, for a fault which we have not committed. But the enemies of the Bible do not observe, when they attack this wonderful third chapter of Genesis, which teaches us more about man and human nature than all the philosophers together—they do not observe that Moses proclaims an incontestable truth, the law of solidarity, one of the greatest laws that govern the world.

The heavenly bodies attract one another and move themselves reciprocally according to the laws of universal gravitation. Men are no more independent or isolated; they naturally exercise upon one another an efficacious influence, either for good or for evil. The entire universe is like a great organism in which everything is connected and bound together; and just as every individual feels the pain when one of his parts is attacked, so also a local disorder

may beget a general trouble, extending itself far beyond the sphere where it took rise.

Hence it is not only in the particular case of original sin, but in a multitude of occasions and circumstances, that we are *solidaries* of one another and that the Creator makes us carry the weight of the sins of our fathers. We rejoice in their virtues, we suffer for their faults and vices. The parents transmit to their children their own health or diseases, and now and then something of their own good or evil dispositions. The past has in the history of nations and individuals a long reëchoing. Glory and honor are an inheritance in the family like goods and riches, and the infamy of the name imprints itself like a scar of shame on the forehead of the children. In society, the prosperity of all depends upon the government of a few; good or bad laws, made by a few men or even by a single one, save or destroy the people; the faults of the chiefs fall as calamities on the heads of those whom they lead, and entire nations groan during centuries under the weight of ancient crimes. A victory or a defeat may fix the lot of a whole country for generations. Those brilliant populations of Asia Minor, who shone so gloriously at the beginning of our era, have seen their civilization disappear, because they were wanting in strength to resist the conquest of the Crescent, and their degraded descendants are hardly to-day a shadow of what their ancestors were in ancient times. If Charles Martel had not crushed on the fields of Poitiers the Arabs of Spain, what would have become of the European peoples? Would not the Moslem invasion have dried up in its source that great river of civilization which has flown since so abundantly through all Europe? Therefore, the European peoples have triumphed with the Franks of Charles, just as the present victims of the heavy yoke of Mohammed have been conquered and enslaved in the person of their ancestors.

Such is the law of human solidarity, a general and universal law which is limited neither by time, nor by space; which applies to the individual, to the family, and to society; which renders in a certain measure the children responsible for the faults of their fathers, the subjects responsible for the faults of their kings or chiefs, both heirs of the merits and vices of their ancestors and of those whom they have governed. It partly explains both the decay and the ennobling of races, the prosperity and power of nations as well as their weaknesses and misfortunes.

"These are facts which it is impossible to dispute. The law that governs them is justified without difficulty, because this solidarity is in itself a good and wise institution. Thanks to this, mankind is not merely an incoherent agglomeration of individuals, strangers one to another, but a family intimately united, wherein the goods of each one turn to the advantage of all. With this view God has instituted it; it is the perversion of the human will that abuses it and draws pernicious effects from it. In this regard, it is with solidarity as with liberty, which is also an excellent thing, in spite of the lamentable abuse that is made thereof. Also, with one common accord, men accept these facts without protesting; they even freely conform their conduct accordingly. The guilty man is struck by society in his goods, in his honor, and in his life, and his children are condemned to suffer from the consequences of his ruin and infamy; the whole population of a city is punished for a rebellion in which many had taken no part; a people are afflicted with the calamities of war in revenge for an injury of which its representatives alone are personally guilty; and nobody decries this as an injustice. The reason is because all are deeply impressed with the sentiment of unity in the family, in the city, and in the nation.

"Original sin explains itself with the help of these principles. It is the consequence of the solidarity which God, the Creator and Sovereign Master, was pleased to establish between the first man and the posterity that should arise from him. This conduct of God might offer some difficulty, if the victims of original solidarity found themselves hurt in their strict and individual right as creatures. But, no; the goods of which mankind remains deprived through the fault of its chief were not due to it. The Creator was free to refuse them purely and simply; with much more reason could He fix at will the possession thereof under such or such a condition. If therefore God had not again raised the posterity of Adam after the fall, He would have left it deprived of these excellent and gratuitous gifts; but, according to the opinion of a numerous and authorized theological school, He would not have deprived it of anything that the divine attributes require of the creature exempt from sin.

"It is true that the state to which mankind finds itself reduced is presented by Catholic teaching as a real state of sin. But this point does not involve any difficulty when we consider the very peculiar kind of sin in question. There is in our fallen state material

for sin, because the first good of which men are born deprived is a superior holiness, implying the idea of moral rectitude; but this privation is effectively imputed to sin only so far as it is voluntary. Now, it is not voluntary by the personal will of each one, but by the will of the whole race, morally personified in its chief. Hence, properly speaking, it is a family sin, a sin of race, and not directly and properly a personal sin; it is the sin of mankind, or, as St. Thomas says, whose doctrine we here follow, it is the sin of the *nature* and not of the *person*. When theology admits that every man is born guilty, it is only in the measure and manner which this explanation permits. In fact, it contains nothing at which sound reason can feel offended." (M. Boisbourdin.)

CHAPTER XIII

THE FALL AND MODERN DISCOVERIES

UNTIL now they have not found in the Assyrian tablets the history of the Fall of our first parents. We discover only some more or less vague allusions in the cylinders and in a certain number of legends like those which relate to us the misdeeds of the seven evil spirits and the sin of the god Zu or Zi. We do not know exactly the nature of the sin of the god Zu; the documents which contain his history are mutilated. They only teach us that he stole the *umsimi*, precious objects, whose nature is unknown. Bel, having fallen asleep, Zu robbed him of his divine garments, of his crown and *umsimi*; he even wished to rob him of his power and to govern "the race of the angels," hence he made war on the god Bel, but without success. After his defeat he was obliged to hide himself in his country and the god Anu ordered his sons to kill him, whilst the latter required that Zu should be excluded from the company of the gods.

A collection of five tablets informs us also that the inhabitants of the earth having offended Anu, the god of heaven, the latter ordered Lubara or Dubara, god of the pest, to afflict these impious ones. The tablets describe at length the ravages caused by this plague.

The tree of life was well known to the Accadians, and to the Assyrians after them, and the bas-reliefs of Ninive frequently present us with a representation of it, guarded on either side by a winged cherub who has the head sometimes of a man, sometimes of an eagle. The tree always assumes a conventional form, and since it generally bears fir-cones we may infer that the Accadians brought the tradition of it with them from their original seat in the older mountainous land of Media, where the fir was plentiful, and identified it with the palm-tree only after their settlement in Chaldea. An old name for Babylon, or for a part of Babylon, was Din-Tir, "the life of the forest," which may possibly have some connection with the tree of life. The special spot, however, in which the sight of the tree of life was localized was close to the city of Eridu, now represented by Dhib, according to Sir H. Rawlinson, where the solar hero Tammuz was supposed to have received the deathblow which obliged him to spend one-half the year in the lower world.

Among the relics brought to England by Layard is an ancient Babylonian cylinder, on which is a design representing, in the centre, a tree with horizontal branches, with two bunches of fruit hanging down, while on each side, respectively, sit a man and a woman; the former with the horns of an ox; the latter with simply a head-dress, but behind her a serpent, erect. It is impossible in looking at this not to think of the Bible story of the temptation of Adam and Eve, or to doubt that it formed part of the traditions of the country, or that the serpent was recognized, in at least one form of the legend, as the agent in the catastrophe. Allusion is also made in a hymn to a fabulous serpent with seven heads, which beats the sea into waves. This serpent was originally identical with the dragon of the deep, combated by Merodach, that is to say with the principle of chaos and darkness, called Mummu Tiamtu, "the chaos of the deep," in the account of the creation. It is also described as "the serpent of night," "the serpent of darkness," "the wicked serpent," and "mightily strong serpent," epithets which show that it was on the one hand the embodiment of moral evil, and on the other was primitively nothing more than the darkness destroyed by the sun, the bright power of the day. It is difficult not to compare the serpent of Genesis with this serpent of Babylonian mythology. No Chaldean legend of the Fall, as we said

has as yet been found, but when we remember how few Chaldean legends have been discovered, and that even for these we are dependent on the selection and copies of Assyrian scribes, we need not be surprised that such should be the case. The Babylonian coloring of the history of Genesis, the fact that the rivers of Paradise are Babylonian rivers, and that the tree of life was familiar to Babylonian art and tradition, make it probable that we shall yet discover the Chaldean version of the Fall of Man as soon as the libraries of Babylonia have been explored. Indeed, this is made almost certain from the existence of an early Babylonian cylinder, now in the British Museum, on which the tree above mentioned is represented with a human figure seated on either side of it.

Cherubim of Eden.—After having driven Adam and Eve from Eden, God, says Genesis iii. 24, *placed before the paradise of pleasure Cherubim, and a flaming sword, turning every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.* We do not know with what form God had clothed these ministers, invisible by their nature. Be this as it may, the remembrance of the Cherubim of Eden has been preserved in the traditions of the nations, disfigured traces of the primitive truth; thus the Chaldean mythology placed its sacred tree, the palm-tree, under the guard of genii; upon some Assyrian monuments the tree of life is watched by a bull, a fact so much the more remarkable because the Assyrian name for bull is *Kirub, Cherub*. The tradition of their presence in Eden impressed itself deeply on the popular mind in Assyria, reappearing age after age in such forms as the winged bulls with human faces, which guarded the entrance to the palace of Ninive. "The watchful bull, which protects the strength of my kingdom and the glory of my honor," says Asarhaddon, in an inscription which refers to one of them. Even the very name Kerubi, which they bore, was applied to the gates which they watched. That they were regarded as at least symbols of mysterious higher existences, able to protect and preserve what was put under their care, is evident from their place being sometimes occupied by known divinities, and by the fact that a bas-relief, representing the erection of one, under the direction of King Sennacherib, bears on it, after the divine symbol, the words, "the bull," "the god."

Moses tells us, as we have seen, that the Cherubim who guarded the gate of earthly Paradise had a flaming sword to keep Adam

and Eve away from it. What was this flaming sword? This question has occupied the interpreters a good deal, and nevertheless none has yet solved it in a satisfactory manner. One might believe that it was the lightning, represented on the figured monuments of Assyria, in the hands of Bin, the god of the atmosphere, under the image of a flame, and called "sword of fire."

CHAPTER XIV

THE ANTEDILUVIAN MEN

GENESIS, after having related the Fall of Adam and Eve and their expulsion from earthly Paradise, makes their children known to us. Assyriology up to the present time has taught us nothing concerning the history of the first men. However, it has thrown some light on certain obscure and badly understood points. Thus, it has revealed to us the real meaning of the name of the second son of Adam, *Abel*. The Rabbis had given it the sense of "breath, nothingness," of "vanity," or of "mourning," and they justified their interpretation by saying that the violent death of Abel, killed by his own brother, Cain, had been for his parents a cause of mourning and of bitter pain. This etymology was not natural, for the victim bore his name before the perpetration of the crime and before his father and mother could foresee his tragic end, but, in default of any other, the explanation had been universally adopted, and to the name of Abel had been given the sense which this same word has in the famous sentence of Ecclesiastes: *Habel habalim hakkol habel*: Vanity of vanities, and all is vanity (Eccl. i. 2). The true meaning of Abel has been revealed to us in the Assyrian, which employs the word "habal" to express the idea of "son, child," in a multitude of inscriptions and of proper names.

The name of Cain, the eldest son of Adam and Eve, signifies "acquisition, fruit." The word *gin* has been preserved in the language of Ninive and Babylonia, where it designates "what one possesses, a slave." Is the latter sense a trace of the curse laid on Cain?

We know that the word "Adam," which was the name of the first man, is often used in Hebrew to designate man himself, considered collectively or in an indeterminate manner. It is employed in Assyrian, in the same sense, under the form *Adamu*. The name of Eve is found perhaps in that of the goddess *Ava*, "life," like that of Cham in the god *Kaimi*, that of Sem in the god *Samu*, and that of Cusch in the god *Kussu*.

Antediluvian Kings.—From Adam until Noah, that is, from the Creation to the Deluge, the Bible counts ten patriarchs. The Chaldean traditions also admitted ten antediluvian kings. It is impossible not to recognize in this number ten a remnant of the primitive tradition, for it appears with a remarkable persistency in the legendary remembrances of a very large number of peoples. Whether they trace back their ancestors to times before or after the Deluge, or whether myth or history predominates in the traditions about their origin, the principal human races count ten primitive fathers, founders of their institutions or antique stem from which they have sprung. Among the Iranians they are the ten Peischaddin monarchs, "the men of the ancient law," who nourished themselves with pure *homa*, or beverage of immortality, and who preserved holiness; among the Hindoos the nine Brahmadikas, who, united with Brahma, their author, are called the ten Pitris, or fathers; among the Germans and Scandinavians, the ten ancestors of Odin; among the Chinese, the ten emperors who partook of the divine nature, before the dawn of historic times; among the Arabs the ten mythic kings of the Adites, primitive inhabitants of the peninsula comprised between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf, etc. The Phœnician Sanchoniaton gives also ten generations of primitive patriarchs. This invariable number ten is so much the more striking because it is in no way connected with religious and philosophical speculations, of a later date, relative to the mystic value of numbers.

The Babylonian tradition, in the time of Berosus, attributed a prodigious duration to the reign of each of the antediluvian kings, if we adhere to the manner in which we generally reckon the *sares*, a period of which the Chaldean historian makes use in his chronology. We generally estimate the *sare* to be 3,600 years, and thus we obtain the enormous figure of 432,000 years, from the first king until the Deluge. We have, in this calculation, only a corrupted remembrance of the longevity of the first men.

Moses of Khorni, the national historian of Armenia, says on the subject of the account of Berosus relative to the ten Chaldean kings: "The ancient writers have changed the names and the duration of life of the antediluvian patriarchs, either according to their caprice, or for some other reason, and what they tell about the origin of things is mingled with true and false; thus in speaking of the first created being they make of him a king, instead of a simple man, give to him a barbarous and meaningless name, and finally attribute to him 3,600 years of life. . . . So also they give to Noah a different name and a life of immense duration." (*History of Armenia* I. 4.) Moses of Khorni, in attributing to the sare the value of 3,600 years, copied only the historians of Chaldea. Abydenus also says in regard to the antediluvian monarchs: "The sare contains 3,600 years, the nera 600, the sosse 60." Eusebius, summing up Berosus after Apollodor, or Polyhistor, also says: "The total sum of time during which the ten kings reigned was 120 sares, that is, 432,000 years." (*Hist. Graec. Fragmenta* II., p. 499.)

Yet, whatever may have been the opinion of Berosus and of his abridgers about the value of the sare in the antediluvian chronology, it is not at all certain that we must attribute to it the duration of 3,600 years. A precious passage of Suidas teaches us that this period also represented among the Babylonians a space of time of eighteen years and six months. "The sares," he says, "are among the Chaldeans, both a measure and a number. One hundred and twenty sares, according to the calculation of the Chaldeans, make 2,222 years, for the sare contains 222 lunar months, which is equivalent to eighteen years and six months." (*Lexicon*, edit. Kuster iii., p. 289.)

Therefore, the sare had a double value, the one astronomical, corresponding to 3,600 years; the other civil, of eighteen years and six months only. According to Suidas, it is the civil calculation which we have to apply to the 120 antediluvian sares of Berosus, for manifestly he makes allusion, in quoting this example, to the duration which the Babylonian history assigns to the time which preceded the great cataclysm. Now, by estimating the sares to be of eighteen months and a half, we obtain, between the biblical chronology and the Chaldean chronology, an agreement that is so much the more striking as we reach it by different ways, the first being founded upon the age of the patriarchs at the date of the birth of their

eldest son, and the second upon the duration attributed to the reign of each of the ten antediluvian kings. In this manner, by means of quite different figures, we have almost an identical result, as can be seen by the following table:—

BIBLICAL ANTEDILUVIAN PATRIARCHS	Year of birth of the eldest son of each patriarch,* according to			Sares			Antediluvian Chaldean Kings
	Hebrew and Vulgate	Samaritan	Septuagint	At a period of 18½ months		At a period of 3,600 years	
ADAM	130	130	230	185	10	36,000	Alorus
SETH	105	105	205	56½	3	10,800	Alaparus
ENOS	90	90	190	240½	13	46,800	Almelon
CAINAN	70	70	170	222	12	43,200	Ammenon
MALALEEL	65	65	165	333	18	68,800	Amegalarus
JARED	162	62	162	185	10	36,000	Daonus
HENOCH	65	60	165	333	18	60,800	Edoranchus
MATHUSALEM	187	67	167	185	10	36,000	Amempsinus
LAMECH	182	53	188	148	8	32,800	Otiartes
NOAH	600	600	600	333	18	60,800	Xisuthrus
TOTAL	1,656	1,302	2,242	2,221	120	432,000	

In comparing the Chaldean chronology with the Biblical chronology, we find no figures in detail alike in this table, and nevertheless, in regard to the total sum of years which elapsed from the creation of man until the Deluge, the sares, calculated according to Suidas, deviate only twenty-one years, at most, from the number furnished by the Septuagint, whilst the Septuagint deviates 586 years from the Hebrew and the Vulgate, and 940 years from the Samaritan text. This coincidence might certainly be considered as fortuitous; but among a people like the Chaldeans, which had so many traditions in common with the Hebrews, it cannot be purely accidental.

Cain.—In regard to the history of Cain, Genesis iv. adds two facts, saying: *Cain had a son called Henoch; and he built a city, which he called by his son's name, Henoch* (Gen. iv. 17). The spouse who gave this son to Cain could be only one of his sisters, a daughter of Adam and Eve; this sort of union evidently took place in the first family of mankind. In what epoch was Henoch born?

* Petau, *De Doctrina Temporum*.

Certainly before the foundation of the city which took his name; but was he already born before the crime committed by his father? Scripture tells us nothing about this, just as it passes in silence many other points which refer to these primitive times, such as the age of Cain and of Abel at the moment when the latter was killed by the former; the number of children which Adam had (Gen. v. 4); the children which Cain himself might have had when he committed his fratricide (we may believe that then he was nearly one hundred and thirty years old, cf. Gen. v. 4-5), or those that were born to him afterwards; the epoch in which he built the city; the years which he lived, etc. This silence is sufficient to render vain certain objections which have been made against the history of the eldest son of Adam. Indeed, we would have to know all this in order to show that the biblical account was in contradiction with itself, from the fact that Cain's fear of being killed by those whom he might meet and the building of the city suppose the existence of a great number of men. The absence of all chronological indications would permit us to find this great number of men, if it were necessary to explain the facts, because several centuries must have or could have elapsed between these different events, in an epoch when the human longevity was so prodigious.

In regard to the "city" which Cain built, a meaning is attached to this word which it does not here possess. The translators render by "city" the Hebrew word *ir*, because this is the meaning which is generally attributed to it. But we must not understand by the *ir* of Cain a city in the actual sense of the word. Here is how Gesenius, a Rationalist, explains it: He derives the word *ir* from the verb *our*, "to watch," "to oversee," and adds: "This word has a very extensive meaning, and may be applied to fields, fortifications, watch-towers, places under guard, etc. In Genesis iv. 17, we must not understand an entire city, nor yet even a cave, because a cave is not built, but a camp of nomads, protected by a ditch or trench against the attacks of wild beasts." (*Thesaurus lingue hebraicæ*, p. 1005.) Cain, therefore, did not build a city, properly speaking, but a "watch-place, or watch-tower," "a place of refuge," in which he believed himself secure against those who might seek his life. Such is the true explanation of this passage of Genesis.

Cainites and Sethites.—Many Rationalists to-day maintain that the genealogy of the children of Seth and that of the children of

Cain are only one and the same genealogy. The proof which they allege in favor of this opinion is that two names are identical in both lists and several other similar lists.

The objections formulated against the two genealogical lists of Genesis have been refuted by Havernick, Dettinger, Baumgarten, Kurtz, Franz Delitzsch, etc. They have remarked one thing that is very clear to all those who are not blinded by prejudice, namely, that the resemblance which the negative criticism pretends to discover in the patriarchal genealogies is purely artificial. In that of Seth, from Adam to Noah, we have ten generations; in that of Cain we have only eight. To place the same number in both, M. Reuss suppresses Adam and Seth in the Sethite genealogy, although the text mentions them expressly. Hence, it is only by means that are disingenuous and contrary to the testimony of Genesis, and, we may add, contrary to the Chaldean tradition, which had equally preserved, as we have seen, the remembrance of ten antediluvian kings, that we have an even number.

But the diversity is not only in the number of the generations; it is also in the account. Whatever summary it may be, the differences which exist between the two genealogies prove that they always have been distinct. The one gives particular details about Henoch, the other about Lamech; that of the Cainites, being that of God's reprobates, contains no figures relative to the duration of their life; on the contrary, that of the Sethites, God's elected, does mark the duration of their life. Thus there exist more differences than resemblances between the two lists: there are more names on the one side than on the other; their order is different; the details are not the same in both; the meaning of the names which are claimed to be identical is distinct. What more is needed to prove that one has no right to confound the two genealogies?

The Antediluvian Giants.—Chapter vi. of Genesis relates that *after men began to be multiplied upon the earth, and daughters were born to them, the sons of God, seeing the daughters of men, that they were fair, took to themselves wives of all which they chose. And Jehovah said: My spirit shall not remain in man forever, because he is flesh. . . . Now giants (nephilim) were upon the earth in those days, for after the sons of God went in to the daughters of men and they brought forth children, these are mighty men of old (gibbōrim), men of renown.*

This short passage has given rise to numerous objections. It contains allusions that are obscure to us. Who were the sons of God and the daughters of men? Who were those *nefilim* and *gibbórim*? The *nefilim*, according to the general interpretation, were *giants*, although the root of this word, *nāfal*, to *fall*, renders its etymology difficult to explain. Therefore, their name is mysterious; as to their history, it is completely unknown. Scripture, which alone could instruct us about them, tells us nothing except their name. It does not even tell us anything of their genealogy. We often repeat that they were the offspring of the union of the sons of God with the daughters of men, but the text does not say so. We read therein merely that "there were *nefilim* upon earth" and that after the sons of God had united themselves with the daughters of men the latter begot the *gibbórim*. This last word has been rendered, like *nefilim*, by *giants* in the version of the Septuagint; however, it has quite a different meaning, and solely implies the idea of strength, not of stature. The original text establishes no direct genealogical relation between the *nefilim* and *gibbórim*; nothing proves that there existed two kinds of *nefilim*, those which preceded the marriage of the sons of God with the daughters of men and those which were the fruit thereof. Therefore, one may relate in regard to the subject all he pleases; we do not need to defend the Bible against things of which it does not speak.

As to the existence of giants, many ancient traditions have preserved their remembrance. The Assyrian monuments frequently represent the hero Izdubar. The Titans are famous in Greek mythology. India, Persia, and Germania knew of the primitive giants. The Mexicans relate that in the second age, *Tlaltoniatuh* or the age of the earth, the giants were annihilated by the commotion which caused the ruin of the world. According to the Peruvians, giants of old came to their country, who rendered themselves guilty of all sorts of crimes and who perished in punishment for their immorality.

The Sons of God and the Daughters of Men.—The infidel critics and a great number of non-Catholic authors maintain that "the sons of God" who united themselves with the daughters of men are no others than angels, and the most of them conclude from this that we have to do here with a fable. They can allege in support, not in their conclusion, but of their interpretation, the

testimony of a certain number of Fathers of the Church, and several do not fail to take advantage thereof.

We acknowledge that Jewish and Christian interpreters have believed, indeed, that the sons of God were angels. Those of the Fathers and of the ancient ecclesiastical writers who, by the sons of God, understood the angels, were led into error on account of the false opinion they had of the nature of the heavenly spirits, to whom they attributed a body like ours, and on account of their wrong belief in the apocryphal book of Henoch, which made them forget that Our Saviour had said: "The angels do not marry" (Matt. xxii. 30). Indeed, infidels pretend that we must not be surprised at seeing that the first Christians believed in the wild imaginings of the book of Henoch, because, according to them, the Apostle St. Jude also believed therein, and in his Epistle taught the faithful to revere this fictitious writing as the word of God. These consequences do not follow at all from the words of St. Jude, and it is even uncertain whether the Apostle knew of this apocryphal production. But even supposing that he knew of it and had moreover quoted it, his quotation would in no manner prove that he believed the sons of God to be angels. *Henoch has prophesied: Behold, the Lord cometh with thousands of His saints to execute judgment upon all* (Jude 14-15; cf. Henoch i. 9). Such are the expressions of St. Jude. He may have quoted this prophecy from tradition, not from a sacred text; but, be this as it may, his language contains no allusion to the question we are treating here, and in no manner can one give testimony in favor of the interpretation of Lactantius and of Tertullian. Even if he had praised the book of Henoch, because it contains one true fact, it would not follow that he approved of all that is contained in this apocryphal writing.

Aside from the pretended testimony of St. Jude, infidels appeal to another argument, taken from philology. The "sons of God," they tell us, designate the angels in Job and in the Psalms (Job. i. 6; ii. 1; xxxvii. 7; Ps. xxix. 1; lxxix. 7); therefore, also in Genesis the "sons of God" are angels.

Because the expression *Benê Elohim*, sons of God, signifies the angels in the poetical books of Job and Psalms, it does not follow that it has also this meaning in the Pentateuch. Never, neither in the Pentateuch, nor in any other prose writing of the Old

Testament, are the angels called sons of God, although there is question of them quite often; but they are always called *messengers* of God, *male-'ak* (Gen. xvi. 7; xix. 1; xxiv. 7, 40; xxviii. 12; lxxviii. 16; Ex. xxiii. 20, etc.). If, therefore, it had been the desire of Moses to speak of angels in the sixth chapter of Genesis, he would have designated them under the name of *male 'akim*. By *sons of God*, he understands those who remained faithful to God, and by the *daughters of man*, he understands those who followed their evil inclinations. The expression itself simply designates creatures of God, made according to His image; hence it is not less becoming to men than to angels; so also, in the Psalms, men are called *sons of the Most High*; *sons of Jehovah*, their Elohim, in Deuteronomy; sons of the Living God, in the prophet Osee (Ps. lxxxii. 6; cf. lxxii. 15; lxxix. 16; Deut. xiv. 1; Osee i. 10).

In concluding these observations, let us point out a last feature. It is worthy of remark that Genesis does not reproach the antediluvian men with acts of idolatry, but only with their immorality. There is no trace of idolatry or of false gods before the Deluge, which is a mark of antiquity and of authenticity. The author of the Pentateuch and the prophets would not have failed to reproach the great criminals, who perished in the Deluge, with their infidelity, if they had been guilty thereof, for their chastisement would have served as an example to the inspired writers in their oburgations against the idolatry of their times.

Longevity of the First Men.—The longevity of the first men, who attained to 969 years,* has furnished quite early matter for objections against the historical character of Genesis. In the first century of our era, Josephus endeavored in his *Jewish Antiquities* to justify the biblical account. Several Fathers of the Church, St. Augustine among others, do the same during the centuries following. In our days every infidel rejects the long duration of life of the antediluvian men. "It is difficult to believe," says Winer, "that a man could live from 700 to 900 years." And he refuses to accept not only this longevity, but also the different explanations by which some have attempted to reduce it to ordinary

*Adam lived 939 years; Seth, 912; Enos, 905; Cainan, 910; Malaleel, 895; Jared, 962; (according to the Samaritan text, 847); Mathusalem, 969 (Samaritan, 720); Lamech, 777 (Samaritan, 653; Septuagint, 753); Noah, 950. Beginning with Noah the duration of life decreases gradually until the time of Moses.

proportions. Reuss does the same and the hypotheses against which this author rebels are the following: Hensler has admitted a year of three months from Adam until after the Deluge; of eight months from Abraham to Joseph; of twelve months from the time of Joseph. Rask has supposed that, until the time of Noah, months and years were synonymous. According to Lesueur, the years of the Septuagint, from the creation of the world to Abraham, must be reduced to Chaldean *sosses* of sixty days. Other learned men have supposed that the figures of the genealogies of Genesis did not designate the duration of life of each patriarch, but a period of civilization. Thus, according to Bunsen, the numbers which indicate at what age the family chiefs had their eldest sons, and the space of time they lived afterwards, are posterior additions, marking cycles; the primitive text marked only the duration of their life and they personified a whole epoch, so that we must understand that they lived from 700 to 900 years, not themselves, but their race, in which they survived. Gatterer has maintained an opinion which approaches that of Bunsen; he believes that the names of the patriarchs designate not persons, but tribes.

All these hypothetical explanations are subject to many objections. Undoubtedly, it is possible that the primitive years were not years like ours, but we cannot reduce them to one or six months. Already St. Augustine remarked, that Seth having begotten at the age of 105 years and Cañan at the age of 70 years, if we were to take the years for simple months, one would lower them to the unacceptable number of ten or seven. The mention of the seventh and of the tenth month in the account of the Deluge (Gen. vii. 11; viii. 4-13) * proves that the year was composed of at least ten months. The cyclical system, proposed by Bunsen and accepted by some Catholics, does not raise the same objections, but one can hardly bring forward any proofs in its favor.

Hence we have to admit, purely and simply, the Mosaic account, which is also in accord with all the ancient traditions, and which latter attribute to the first men a longer life than to their descendants. Not only Manetho among the Egyptians, Berosus among the Chal-

* We can conclude from these passages of Genesis that the year was composed at that time of twelve months. In fact, after the mention of the tenth month the text yet expressly indicates fifty-four days before we arrive at the first day of the following year. (Gen. viii. 5, 10, 12, 13.)

deans, Mochus among the Phœnicians, but Hesiod, Hecateus, Hellanicus, Acusilaus, Ephorus, and others among the Greeks, speak of the longevity of the first men. Among the Hindoos and Chinese, we find the trace of analogous remembrances. The Zend-Avesta makes Yima, the first man, live more than three times three hundred years. It is the same in America, where the traditions of the natives relate that the ancient men lived until their limbs were worn out.

Some refuse to admit the longevity of the patriarchs by alleging that it is physically impossible. But is this so certain? Has our biological science to-day the necessary data to fully solve this question? This is at least very doubtful. We do not know what the primitive men were. So many changes were produced in the human organism in consequence of the formation of the races, the influence of surroundings, heredity, and crossings, that these notable changes may have effectively modified the duration of life. A learned writer who has especially studied this question has remarked:—

“There is nothing in the organs and functions of the body that indicates their duration. . . . It would not be at all contrary to reason nor to the laws of the organism that man, free from sicknesses which disturb its harmony or exterior violence which breaks its mechanism, might live several centuries. The long life of the patriarchs was a more rational fact, and more in harmony with the laws of physiology, than the short existence of the men who people the earth to-day.” (Dr. P. Foissac, *La Longevité Humaine*, p. 346.)

CHAPTER XV

THE TOWER OF BABEL

GENESIS XI. 1-9 relates that after the Deluge men spoke only one tongue and lived together in the land of Sennaar, in Babylonia, and each one said to his neighbor: *Come, let us make brick, and bake them with fire. And they had brick instead of stones, and slime instead of mortar. And they said: Come, let us make a city and a tower, the top whereof may reach to heaven; and let us make our name famous before we be scattered abroad into all lands.* This

undertaking having displeased Jehovah, He came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of Adam were building. And he said: Behold, it is one people, and all have one tongue. . . . Therefore, let us go down, and there confound their tongue, that they may not understand one another's speech. And so the Lord scattered them from that place into all lands, and they ceased to build the city. And therefore the name thereof was called Babel, because there the language of the whole earth was confounded.

Berosus, a Chaldean priest of the epoch of the first Seleucides, had left an analogous account, of which two not very unlike versions are left to us, the one transmitted by Abydenos, the other by Alexander Polyhistor (*Historic. Græcor. Fragm.*; Eusebius, *Chron.* I. 18; *Praep. Ev.* XI. 14). Comparison between the fragments of Berosus and the cuneiform texts, wherever it has been possible, has always shown that the latter had really drawn its accounts from Babylonian sources, and not from the Hebrew texts, as some pretend in order to lessen the value of its testimony corroborating the biblical accounts. In reality, the Babylonian account of the building of the tower of Babel has not yet been discovered and not more than a certain trace of it has been found on the Babylonian cylinders. George Smith, in his *Chaldean Genesis* has published a text which he believed, as Chad Boscawen and Sayce still believe, had reference to this event; but the text is so defaced, that the translation presents only a very small degree of probability; besides, words are found in it whose meaning is little known, and particularly that of *tammāsle* (?), which is translated by "tongue." Franz Delitzsch remarks that the translation of the words that would make most for the meaning of the piece is that which leaves the most to be desired.

A text of Nabuchodonosor, son of Nabopolassar, is alleged with more success, either for the fact itself, or for the localization of the Tower of Babel and its identification with the present Birs-Nimrud, at Borsippa, about eight miles from the ruins of the city properly so called, and seventeen miles from those of the royal city of Babylon. This text mentions chiefly two temples, the one called *Esakila* (house on the high summit), on the north of Babylon, on the left shore of the Euphrates, and whose ruins form the present Babil; the other on the right shore, called *Ezida* (firm house), at Borsippa, a locality perhaps formerly comprised in the agglomera-

tion of Babylon, whose ruins form Birs-Nimrud. Nabuchodonosor repaired both and adorned them in a sumptuous manner. The latter, in particular, had never been completed; a former king had commenced it, says Nabuchodonosor, but had left it unfinished at the height of forty-two cubits; the rain, penetrating the bricks of baked clay, had even caused it to fall into ruin. Nabuchodonosor repaired it entirely, then he finished it. This translation, which is certain, leaves no room for the confusion of the languages, an allusion to which the learned Mr. Oppert believed he saw therein; nor to the remote date "since the days of the Deluge," which the same savant believed he saw attributed to the pyramid. The formula "after the Deluge" is not unknown to the Assyrian language, where it reads *arki abubi*; *ultu umi rukuti*, employed by Nabuchodonosor, is a formula of frequent use, signifying "since remote days." These remote days, and the absence of designation of the *sarru mahru*, of the "former king," are the only features which could permit us to attribute to this inscription some relation with the Tower of Babel.

The natural site of the Tower of Babel, beyond the mere fact that it was somewhere in Babylon, has not yet been settled. It is generally considered to be represented by the great pile of Birs Nimrud, which stood in Borsippa, the suburb of Babylon, and was dedicated to Nebo and called "the Temple of the Seven Lights" or planets. This ruin has been examined by Sir Henry Rawlinson; details of his operations here are given in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol. XVIII., and Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*, p. 544. Sir Henry discovered by excavations that the tower consisted of seven stages of brickwork on an earthen platform, each stage being of a different color. This is explained by the fact that it was devoted to the seven planets. The heights of the earthen platform were not ascertained, but the first stage, which was an exact square, was 272 feet each way, and 26 feet high, the bricks being blackened with bitumen; this stage is supposed to have been dedicated to the planet Saturn. The second stage was a square of 230 feet, 26 feet high, faced with orange-colored bricks; supposed to have been dedicated to Jupiter. The third stage, 188 feet square, and 26 feet high, faced with red bricks, was probably dedicated to Mars. The fourth stage, 146 feet square, and 15 feet high, was probably dedicated to the Sun, and is thought by Sir Rawlinson to have been originally plated

with gold. The fifth stage is supposed to have been 104, the sixth 62, and the seventh 20 feet square, but the top was too ruinous to decide these measurements. These stages were probably dedicated to Venus, Mercury, and the Moon. Each stage of the building was not set in the centre of the stage on which it rested, but was placed 30 feet from the front, and 12 feet from the back. The ruin at present rises 154 feet above the level of the plain, and is the most imposing pile in the whole country. According to Nabuchodonosor, as said already, it had been built to the height of 42 cubits by "a former king," who, however, had not completed its summit, and it had long been in a ruinous condition when Nabuchodonosor undertook to restore and finish it. Prof. Schrader imagines that the long period during which it had remained an unfinished ruin caused the growth of the legend which saw in it a monument of the overthrow of human presumption, the diversity of languages in Babylonia being sufficient to account for the localization of the confusion of tongues in the country.

Sir Henry Rawlinson now proposes to place the Tower of *tul-ellu* at the ruins now called Amran, within the city of Babylon itself. Here he thinks were the temple of Anu, on the sight of the ruined tower, a chapel dedicated to Nebo, an altar of Merodach, the royal palace (now represented by the mound of the Kasr), and the hanging gardens, all inclosed by a common wall. The quarter of Babylon thus inclosed he would identify with the Calano of the Bible, principally on the ground that the Septuagint rendering of Isaias x. 9 is, "Have I not taken the region above Babylon and Chalanne where the tower was built?"

A third site has been claimed for the Tower on the Babil or Mujellibeh mound on the north side of Babylon. This represents the famous temple of Belus or Bel, whose great festival marked the beginning of the year and the vernal equinox. But there is no evidence to support this third opinion.

In the Babylonian and Assyrian sculptures there are occasionally representations of towers similar in style to the supposed Tower of Babel. One of these is given on the stone of Merodach Baladan I., opposite p. 236 of Mr. Smith's *Assyrian Discoveries*; another occurs on the sculptures at Ninive, representing the city of Babylon; this tower, however, cannot represent the Borsippa pile, since it consists of only five stages.

CHAPTER XVI

ETHNOGRAPHIC TABLE; OR DISPERSION OF THE NATIONS

BEFORE circumscribing definitely his history to that of his own race, Moses casts a general glance on the families issuing from Noah, and draws a grand picture, which even Rationalists cannot help admiring. The tenth chapter of Genesis is not only a geographical table of the nations, but it is also an ethnographic tableau, or more correctly, "ethnogenic," because it contains a genealogical and linguistic tree. However, it is not complete in its details.

The world it describes, if we consider only the nations mentioned, without paying attention to their ramifications, is bounded on the north by the Black Sea and by the mountains of Armenia; on the east, it extends scarcely beyond the shores of the Tigris; on the south it reaches the Persian Gulf, embracing Arabia and the Red Sea, and stretching to Abyssinia, passing through Egypt; on the west it embraces the eastern islands of the Mediterranean. Moses had no idea of giving a complete picture of the universe, nor the genealogy of all the peoples born of Noah. He depicted only those which were most important in the history of religion and of revelation.

The exactness of the teachings contained in the tenth chapter of Genesis is generally admitted. Critics are divided only as to the date of its compilation. François Lenormant makes the following reflections on the subject:—

"It is the most ancient, the most precious, and the most complete document concerning the distribution of the peoples in the most remote antiquity of the world. We have even the right to consider it anterior to the time of Moses; for it presents a state of the nations, which the Egyptian monuments show us already changed in several points in the time of the exodus. Moreover, the enumeration therein is made in a regular geographical order, round a center, which is Babylonia and Chaldea, not Egypt or Palestine. It is, therefore, probable that this description of the nations and of their origin forms part of the memories which the family of Abraham brought from Chaldea, and that it represents the distribution of the peoples known in the civilized world at the time when that patriarch left the shores of the Euphrates, that is, two thousand years before the Christian era." (*Histoire de l'Orient*, Vol. III., p. 15.)

Objection is made to the correctness of the ethnographic table of Genesis, where the Phœnicians are ranked among the Chamites, when they were, in reality, a Semitic people, spoke a purely Semitic idiom, and differed but little from the Hebrews. It is true that the Phœnicians spoke the Semitic language, but it cannot be concluded

from this that they were not Chanaanites. There are peoples in Europe who speak languages derived from the Latin who, nevertheless, are not descendants of the Latins.

It is a known fact that the Phœnicians of Palestine came, as Herodotus expressly testifies, from the Erythrean Sea, and, consequently, from a Cushite country. When, later on, we behold them speaking a Semitic language, it proves that they, like other peoples coming in contact with greater or more numerous races, met and mingled with the Semitics, and ended in being absorbed by them.

As to the dispersion of the Semitics, the opinion most generally received until lately is that this people, after the Deluge, dwelt first in Armenia. But in what place did they separate, to form different nations? Genesis, according to the universal interpretation of the narrative of the Tower of Babel, tells us that it was in the plain of Sennaar. Some modern scholars object, at least indirectly, to the assertion which places the cradle of the Semitics in Arabia. Although it can be maintained that this opinion is not absolutely in contradiction with Genesis, because the Semitics could have at first settled in the Arabic peninsula, and because the family of Abraham might have gone up afterwards from there to Ur, in Chaldea, the natural sense of the text is not in accord with this theory. For a long time it was believed that all mankind had been gathered in the plain of Sennaar, during the time of the building of the Tower of Babel. To-day exegetists willingly admit that only the descendants of Sem were there,—if not all, at least the majority of them. The posterity of Noah had become too numerous at this epoch to be restricted to the plain of Babylon; Egypt was peopled too long before Abraham to make it possible to suppose that there were not yet any inhabitants of the Nile Valley, a few generations before Abraham, etc. The most of the arguments brought forward in favor of the relative antiquity of man may be here applied. Finally, the language of Moses may be restricted to the race of Sem.

The present historical documents do not furnish direct proof that all the Semitics lived together in the Babylonian plain, but comparative philology furnishes means by which this fact is indirectly established. Although these means may not always appear decisive, it is so much the more proper to make use of them in the present case, because our adversaries cannot allege any others. They

contest the exactitude of the inspired account in the name of linguistics; we will answer them in the name of this same science.

First, let us remark that we can divide the Semitics into two groups: the southern group, comprising the Arabs, the Himyarites and the Ethiopians or Abyssinians; and the northern group, the Chaldeo-Assyrians, the Chanaanites, the Israelites, and the Arameans or Syrians. They are distinguished from each other, not only by geographical position, but also by various peculiarities of language, and by certain religious traditions. From these it is clear that the Chaldeo-Assyrians, the Hebrews, and Arameans descend from ancestors who still continued to live together, after having been separated from the Arabs, Himyarites, and Ethiopians. But anteriorly the Semitics of the North and those of the South formed only one people. Their language proves this incontestably. By the avowal of all the Orientalists, without exception, all the so-called Semitic languages, the Hebrew, the Assyrian, the Aramean, the Ethiopian, and the Arabic, are only so many different branches of the same stem; in fact, their dictionary and grammar are almost the same; the tri-literal roots and the principal grammatical flexions are identical.

Most of the Semitists are also agreed that the Arab language is that which approaches nearest the primitive language of the children of Sem; but some among them, going still further, wish to conclude from this that the Arabs represent the purest type of the primitive Semitic, in his language, morals, customs, and religious ideas. This theory has been upheld by Eberhard Schrader. According to him, the antiquity of the Arabic language proves that Arabia is the cradle of the Semitics themselves. It was from northern or central Arabia, he says, that all the Semitics spread: the Ethiopians and Sabeans towards the south, the Babylonians and Arameans or Syrians towards the north. Mr. Sprenger has expressed an analogous opinion. He supposes that all the Semitics are only Arabs emigrated to different localities, and distinguishing themselves from one another only because they belong to different stems. He supports himself on the Arabic conquests which followed the foundation of Islamism, to establish that it was the genius of this people to carry its multitudes to the furthest parts; but to refute him, it is sufficient to remark that what occurred after Mohammed is not established before him.

Mr. Schrader has recourse to more serious arguments than a vague analogy. First, he maintains that the Chaldeans of Armenia are the same people as the Chalybes, and that they have nothing in common with the Semitics. This particular point matters little. The second part of his thesis, namely, that all the Semitics come from Arabia, is more important. The proof which he gives for the latter assertion consists, as we have remarked already, in this, that the Arab language approaches the nearest to the Semitic mother tongue. It is there, he says, where it has been best preserved, that we must seek the cradle of the race.

To this we answer that the conclusion is not legitimate. The Sanskrit and the Greek are, among the Aryan languages, those which approach nearest to the primitive Indo-European language; nobody, however, thinks about concluding from this that India or Greece is the primitive cradle of the Aryans. The preservation of the Arab dictionary, and particularly of the grammar, in a relatively greater purity and integrity than those of the other Semitic idioms, is easily explained by the geographical situation of Arabia. This peninsula, isolated from three sides by the sea, and separated from the rest of the world on the fourth side by a desert, was condemned by this very fact to have very little communication with other peoples, so that contact with foreign races could not change its language.

Hence, to render an account of the peculiarity of the Arabic language, it is enough to admit that those who spoke it settled quite early on the peninsula, before the Semitic idioms had yet the distinctive marks which we notice in them to-day. Whilst the Babylonians, Assyrians, Hebrews, Arameans, and Ethiopians diversely modified their manner of speaking, according to the surroundings among which they lived and under the influence of the foreign peoples with whom they came in contact, the Arabs, living alone, faithfully retained their language with their morals and customs, so that the documents which we possess in this language, although they date only from the sixth century of our era, approach more closely to the language of the children of Sem than any other Semitic document, and even more than the Assyrian documents, which antedate them by more than two thousand years.

Mr. Schrader has made the attempt, it is true, but unsuccessfully, to set aside this explanation, which overthrows his hypothesis. If it were well founded, he says, then the Arabs, in wandering from

the cradle of their race in Arabia, would have modified their primitive characteristics, like the other Semites, through coming into contact with the nations they met on their route, in moving towards the west or southwest.

Here is what we can bring forward against this reasoning. The Sabeans, who founded a great kingdom and had commercial relations with other nations; the Ethiopians, who passed from southern Arabia into Africa, modified themselves, indeed, and had a particular language. The Arabs of the north and of the centre of the peninsula preserved intact their idiom and mode of life, although imported, thanks to the little traveling they engaged in and the isolation in which they lived. In emigrating from the shores of the Euphrates and Tigris into their new country they had crossed a desert, and it is only necessary to refer to a map to become convinced that they had only a short voyage to make and that they met too few strangers on their route to exercise any sensible influence on them.

But it is not sufficient to refute the reasoning of those who pretend to place the cradle of the Semitics in Arabia, we must also establish by positive arguments the fallacy of their opinion.

Alfred von Kremer has combated with the help of philology the opinion which places in Arabia the cradle of the Semitics. By comparing the different Semitic languages we can determine in their principal characteristics both the flora and fauna of the country which the Semitic race inhabited, before the separation of its different branches. For these peoples to give to plants and animals the same name, they must have known these plants and animals in the countries where their ancestors dwelt. As to the names which differ in the different tongues, they must be of a much later date; they have been given at another time and in another country.

These philological premises are unanswerable in the eyes of all linguists. Now, the comparative study of the Semitic languages proves that Arabia is not the cradle of those who speak them. In fact, all these languages give the same name to the camel, which, consequently, was known before the separation; on the contrary, they call the ostrich by different names. Therefore, the first Semitics did not live in Arabia, for the ostrich is a native of that country. The Arameans alone call the ostrich *ne'âmâ*, after the Arab

ndām, but they borrowed that name from the Arabs, whose caravans, coming from Mecca, brought feathers of that bird into their country.

The Arabic dictionary contains two other particular names of animals, that of the small jerboa, *yarbu*, to-day *djerbāa*, and that of the lynx, *tuffah*. But these quadrupeds, which are peculiar to Arabia, have no name in the other Semitic languages, whilst the ostrich has another name than its Arabic name, at least in Hebrew, wherein this bird is called *ya en ya' anah*. If the Hebrews had come originally from the Arabic peninsula, as Mr. Schrader supposes, they would never have forgotten the name of the winged animal, which they had learned to know in their first country, and would not have given it a new name. The names of many other animals furnish analogous proofs.

But if Arabia was not the cradle of the Semitics, where was it? According to some Semitists, following the opinion current to-day, the race originated in Upper-Asia, near the cradle of the Aryans. According to their statement, it was in the Upper-Hauran, to the west of Bolortag, on the plateau of Pamir, that the first Semitics lived in contact with the Aryans. Starting from here and following the great water course, particularly the Oxus, they directed their way towards the west, passed to the southwest of the Caspian Sea, and penetrated, by one of the narrow passes of the Elburz, into the mountains of Media. From there they entered into Mesopotamia.

The first part of the route traced for the Semitics is a pure hypothesis. Only one fact can be historically established, and this is that we first meet with the Semitics in Mesopotamia. To maintain the contrary, Alfred von Kremer appeals to the Semitic flora, such as the dictionary of their language makes it known to us. According to him, the Semitic languages give different names to the palm and to the date trees. The most ancient expression, he says, to designate the date tree, *dikla*, is found among the Aramean tribes, who lived in the plains of Babylonia. This assertion is not correct. *Dikla* is not the most ancient name of the date tree in the Semitic, and the Arameans did not live, in the primitive times, in the plains of Babylonia; they spoke the Aramaic, in Babylonia, only after the Assyrian had become a dead language, a few centuries before Christ.

The primitive name of the date tree, in the Semitic languages, is *tamaru*, as is proved by the Hebrew *tamar*, which we have read already in Exodus and Leviticus, and the Ethiopian *tamart*. The ordinary name of this tree in Arabic must be recognized in *nachl*, but tamar is used also, and designates especially the date, or, in general, a fruit.

We find also among the Arabs very ancient traces of the word *dikla*, in the center as in the south of the peninsula. The geographical dictionary of Yakut mentions a locality called *Dakalatu*, "where the palm trees are," it adds, in the district of Beni-Chubar, at Yamama. The ethnographic table of Genesis names also *Dikla* among the Joctanide tribes in southern Arabia. Finally, they call, in Arabic, *dakal* a palm tree which produces many dates, but of bad quality. Therefore, there is reason to admit two primitive names for the palm trees in Semitic, *tamaru* and *diklu* or *dakalu*. Consequently, the Semitics knew this tree before their dispersion, although we can or must admit that the artificial fruitfulness of this tree only goes back to the historical time, Assyrian and Aramean, and has been invented in Babylonia.

These facts proclaim the original country of the palm tree to have been situated in the lowlands of the upper and middle course of the Euphrates and Tigris, as it is there also the animals live whose names we find in the Semitic mother tongue. As, finally, it is in these places that the traditions of the Semitics themselves place their cradle, to the west of Holvan, in praise of whose palm trees the Persian poets have sung, it is there that we must place the primitive home of the descendants of Sem, the place where they all were gathered before becoming dispersed towards the south and southwest.

Besides, we must remark that all we know of the primitive flora of the Semitics confirms this conclusion. Chaldea does not abound in variegated plants; but those which we can consider as indigenous to the lowlands of the Euphrates and Tigris, namely, the many species of poplars, the tamarisk, and the pomegranate, as well as the palm tree, have the same name in all the Semitic languages. On the contrary, the plants which grow in the temperate zone or on the mountains, the elm, the ash, the chestnut, the oak, the beech, the pine, or the cedar, either have different names in the different branches of the Semitic family, or have adopted the same name

only in a comparatively recent epoch. Chaldea was a rich and abundant granary, barley and wheat yielding wonderful crops. Wheat, barley, and corn are called by the same names in all the idioms of the descendants of Sem, as are also the agricultural pursuits, the occupations of pastoral life, hunting, and fishing. The same may be said of geographical situations, instruments, materials, and metals.

CHAPTER XVII

THE TEN PLAGUES OF EGYPT AND THE CROSSING OF THE RED SEA

I. THE children of Jacob, having gone down to Egypt with their father, multiplied so rapidly that Pharaoh, fearful of an uprising, and in order to prevent the Israelites from becoming too numerous, forced them to engage in the most severe labor that tyranny could devise. God wished to deliver His people from this bondage, and He sent Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh to ask him in the Lord's name to permit the Israelites to depart. Pharaoh refused, notwithstanding the proofs which Moses gave in testimony of the divinity of his mission. Moses then called on God for aid, and He inflicted on the Egyptians the series of sufferings which are known as the "Ten Plagues of Egypt." Rationalists, unwilling to admit the supernatural character of these plagues, were forced to denounce the Mosaic account as a preposterous fiction. Modern research among the antiquities of Egypt has established, however, that what Moses related could have happened, and, moreover, some of the things he mentions are still noticeable in that land of marvel. Thus frustrated, the infidel attack was turned in another direction, only to arrive at the same result. They admit the plagues as historical, but deny their miraculous origin.

This assertion is also false. Undoubtedly, some of the scourges mentioned in Exodus had already been experienced by the Egyptians, and under different circumstances were due to natural causes. But on this occasion everything goes to prove that they were supernatural: their sudden production and cessation by order of Moses;

their intensity, and especially the fact that the land of Gessen, inhabited by the Hebrews, experienced none of the horrors; add to this the astonishment of the Egyptians themselves, who, although accustomed to these scourges, on this occasion saw evidenced in them a proof of the divine power granted to Moses. Finally, compare these plagues with the testimony furnished by Egyptology, and the comparison will establish their authenticity, as well as their supernatural origin.

First Plague.—The first plague was the change of the water into blood (Ex. vii. 20). The Nile is annually subject to a phenomenon which resembles this scourge. At the period of overflow, the water becomes brackish, and the river takes on an appearance which has given it the designation of the "Green Nile"; while in this condition the water is not fit to drink. Then, after three or four days, the water changes in color to a dark red hue, "more like," says Osborn, "to blood than to any other matter with which I should compare it." This is the phenomenon of the "Red Nile," during which period the water is very wholesome and palatable when used for drinking. When this phenomenon became known, Rationalists cried out: "Behold the Mosaic scourge! It is produced annually, and in the most natural manner." For their part, some Catholic apologists have maintained that the first plague of Egypt was the phenomenon of the Red Nile, but produced by Moses in a supernatural manner. We regard the opinion of these Catholics as improbable, and we absolutely reject that of the Rationalists. To the former we say: You must acknowledge with us that it was not more difficult for God to change the Nile into blood than to give it only the appearance of blood. Let us, therefore, agree with the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, all of whom, even those who knew Egypt, and the phenomenon of the "Red Nile," have always seen in the first plague a transformation of the water of the Nile into real blood.

To the Rationalists we answer as follows: Even if the phenomenon described in Exodus should be that of the "Red Nile," the circumstances that accompany it are such that we have to look upon this first plague as miraculous.

In fact: (1) This miracle took place at Tanis, where the court was located. Now, the phenomenon of the "Red Nile" is not seen to-day at this place; hence it could not have taken place, at least

in a regular manner, in the time of Moses. (2) It is in July, generally, that the Nile becomes red; now, we know from Exodus (xii. 18) that the tenth plague took place at the beginning of April, the seventh in March (ix. 31), and the second seven days after the first (vii. 25). A comparison of these three accounts forces the conclusion that the ten plagues were separated from one another by about a week only, and that, consequently, the change of the Nile took place in February, a time in which the phenomenon of the Red Nile never occurs. (3) *The fishes that were in the river died, and the river corrupted, and the Egyptians could not drink thereof* (Ex. vii. 21). Here are circumstances which the Rationalists, in their hypothesis, cannot explain in a natural manner, because the water of the Nile is never more healthful than at the period of the Red Nile. Red water or blood, the Nile, therefore, undergoes, under the stroke of the rod of Moses,—a chemical change which is inexplicable in the natural order.

Second Plague.—This plague was an invasion of frogs; a real Egyptian scourge and a mark of authenticity of the Mosaic account, but at the same time a supernatural scourge. In fact: (1) Egypt was never infested with these animals as it was in the time of Moses, when the frogs entered apartments, covering the furniture and the beds, and filling all the utensils of the household; all of which things suppose an immense number of these animals and which are, moreover, absolutely outside of their natural instinct. (2) The time of the year when the frogs are most numerous is that which follows the overflow of the Nile, whilst the invasion ordered by Moses preceded the inundation. (3) The frogs appeared suddenly when Aaron had stretched forth his hand over the water (viii. 6), and they departed at the moment fixed by Pharaoh himself; besides, the latter recognized the supernatural character of the scourge, because he besought Moses to deliver the land from it.

Third Plague.—At the stroke of Aaron's rod *there came sciniphs* (gnats or mosquitoes) *on man and on beasts*. Mosquitoes abound in Egypt, and Moses makes use of them to force the Pharaoh, always obstinate in his refusal, to permit the Hebrews to depart. Generally, these insects are plentiful in Egypt only on the seashore, but at this time all the dust of Egypt was changed into mosquitoes by Aaron's rod. This forms the miraculous character of this plague the more evidently because it was not at the time when these insects

abound the most, and this miraculous character was so manifest that the magicians, who had been insensible to the first two miracles, were convinced by the third and cried out: *This is the finger of God* (viii. 19).

Fourth Plague.—The mosquitoes were followed by flies, a not less insupportable affliction (viii. 24). To this plague we may apply the same remarks as to the preceding one: the abundance of flies in Egypt confirms the historical character of the account; the fright of the Pharaoh and the concessions which he commences to make to Moses clearly show that there was something supernatural in this plague and in which they again recognized the hand of God.

Fifth and Sixth Plagues.—The Pharaoh having withdrawn his promises after having been delivered from the plague of flies, God struck the beasts of the Egyptians with a pest that caused them to perish in great numbers: horses, asses, camels, oxen, sheep, all were struck. Here, again, the supernatural character of the plague cannot be denied, although epizootics may be frequent in Egypt; this begins and ceases at the precise moment appointed by Moses, and the Pharaoh himself admits that the cattle belonging to the Hebrews were exempt from it (xi. 7). The land of Gessen was also exempt from the plague that followed,—that is, from a pest that struck both man and beast, and whose miraculous character was marked by the fact that it appeared at the exact moment when Moses, by the order of God, took ashes and threw them in the air, under the eyes of heart-hardened Pharaoh.

Seventh Plague.—All these chastisements were useless. Then Moses went to see the king, and said to him: *I will cause it to rain to-morrow at this same hour, an exceeding great hail, such as has not been in Egypt from the day that it was founded, until this present time; men and beasts, and all things that shall be found abroad, and not gathered together out of the fields, which the hail shall fall upon, shall die* (ix. 18). The hailstorm took place as it had been foretold, that is, in a miraculous manner; the Pharaoh, frightened, promised to Moses all he desired, and the prophet needed only to stretch forth his hand and stop the hailstorm.

Eighth and Ninth Plagues.—The work of destruction, beginning with the fall of hail on the fields of Egypt, was completed by a frightful invasion of locusts. The ravages which these numberless armies of insects produced, when they had passed over a

fruitful plain, may be summed up in these words: "Before them a paradise; behind them a desert." The invasion which took place at this time was much more dreadful than all the others, and it arrived at the hour and with the intensity foretold by Moses. The Egyptians were astounded; seldom had they seen and felt this plague, and never in so terrible a manner. "Locusts," says Vigouroux, "are sufficiently known in Egypt to justify the account of Exodus: they are not known enough to affect the supernatural character of this plague." Everything was struck by them, the Pharaoh was humbled and submitted, but only to become obstinate again. He was punished by the ninth plague; darkness so thick that it could be felt, figuratively speaking, covered the land of Egypt (x. 21). Undoubtedly, there is question here of a *chamsin* storm, a dreadful wind carrying with it complete darkness, a very high temperature, and clouds of sand reduced to a fine dust, which makes the *darkness palpable*, as the Scripture observes. The supernatural characters of the ninth plague are: Its instantaneous production at the command of Moses, the exemption of the land of Gessen, the duration of the scourge, which generally lasts only twelve hours, and which then was prolonged for three days.

Tenth Plague.—All having been useless, God struck the master stroke: the exterminating angel destroyed *every* first-born in the land of the Egyptians, *from the first-born of Pharaoh, who sitteth on his throne, even to the first-born of the handmaid that is at the mill, and all the first-born of beasts* (xi. 5). Here it is impossible to question the supernatural character of the scourge, even if the exterminating angel should have employed a natural means, such as pestilence, for instance. As to its historical character, it is confirmed by the Egyptological discoveries. The monuments inform us that Menephtah, the Pharaoh of the Exodus, had associated to his throne his eldest son; they give us also to understand that this son died before his father, because this eldest son was called Menephtah, and because the successor of the Pharaoh in question bore the name of Sethos.

It can be seen, therefore, that when the authority of the Pentateuch is affirmed by other proofs given elsewhere, it is not in the history of the *Plagues of Egypt* one can look for weapons to break down this authority. On the contrary, all research confirms the biblical account, and we can say once more that the finger of God is here.

II. THE CROSSING OF THE RED SEA.—The route followed by the Hebrews when leaving Egypt, and the spot where they crossed the Red Sea, have given rise to many inquiries and controversies. From the apologetical point of view, the only one which engages us here, we enter the discussion simply to refute the theories which tend to deprive this event of its miraculous character. These theories may be reduced to two:—

1. According to M. Brugsch, the Hebrews passed from Egypt into Asia, not by way of the Red Sea, but by the Isthmus of Suez; from here they passed along the Mediterranean Sea. Now in this place there are some lagoons, called Lake Serbonis, which are separated from the Mediterranean only by a long and narrow strip of land. It was this narrow road the Hebrews followed. When the Egyptians wished to recapture them a high sea covered this sort of jetty and engulfed the enemies of God's people. Similar conditions have been produced in this same place for other armies.

The reasons which oblige us to reject this notion are: (1) In order to establish it the author is forced to have recourse to geographical descriptions and identifications that are absolutely imaginary, as later travelers have proved. (2) The Book of Exodus does not speak of a passage on the shore of a sea, but of a crossing of sea, which is very different; moreover, it does not speak of the Mediterranean, but of the Red Sea. It is true that Exodus calls this sea *Yam souf*, "sea of weeds"; but it is so named in the Old Testament, and it is certain that this name is that of the sea called the Red Sea by the Greeks. Lake Serbonis, whatever Brugsch may claim, cannot have been this "sea of weeds," for its waters are as unfitted as those of the Dead Sea for all such vegetation. (3) Finally, the result of this theory would be to destroy the miraculous character of the biblical event. "The miracle," says Brugsch, "then ceases to be a miracle." He adds, it is true, that Providence plays its rôle, nevertheless, and that his explanation is orthodox, but this is a declaration which his own followers have not taken seriously.

2. Thus, one of the reasons which makes us reject the theory of Brugsch is that it destroys the miraculous character of the passage of the *Yam souf*; this character is, indeed, unquestionable, and this is the reason why we must, in the other theories which have located the place of the passage through the Red Sea, distinguish two things: the place and the character of this passage. As to the exact place

we need not discuss that here; but as to the supernatural character of the event we cannot say like Josephus: "Let each one think what seems best to him." Du Bois-Ayme, Salvador, etc., wished to see in this fact only a purely natural event; they suppose that the passage was effected by fording, on a sort of high ground which the low sea had partially left uncovered. The only evidence on which their theory is based, is that there still exist two fords at the extreme point of the Red Sea. To overthrow this hypothesis, two observations will suffice. (1) *The waters*, says the Sacred Text, *stood as a wall on the right and on the left hand of the Israelites*. Now in the hypothesis of Salvador, it was just the contrary that should have taken place; the water should have been below and not above the Hebrews. This detail is very important; for nobody has ever confounded a wall with a ditch, these two obstacles having an absolutely different character. (2) The Red Sea was crossed by more than two millions of men, encumbered with numerous herds. Suppose that they formed in files of a thousand men each, it would have required at least one full hour before the whole column could have entered the sea, and about four hours to effect the crossing. Can anyone reasonably maintain that this could be done within the space of the sea-tide? This would be appealing to one prodigy in order to reject another; and, moreover, it is twisting a very clear text, to make it state the contrary of what it contains.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE PATRIARCHS, ABRAHAM, JACOB, AND JOSEPH

THE infidels of our days treat as myths almost all the accounts contained in Genesis, either because they find them improbable, or for some other arbitrary cause. In most cases it is impossible to refute them categorically, because the documents are wanting, and we are thus deprived of the extrinsic means necessary to justify the sacred account, Genesis being the only book that treats of events so ancient. Hence we can establish only in a general way the historical character of the Pentateuch, whilst we remark that what appears improbable to this or that mind is not on this account less real.

Providence has, however, vouchsafed that in the hour when they attack our Sacred Books with an unheard-of violence, we should have new weapons to defend them; and it has caused to spring forth, as from the bowels of the earth, from the depth of ruins under which they had been buried for centuries, unexpected witnesses who come, to the great astonishment of infidels, as well as of the faithful themselves, to give testimony in favor of the veracity of Moses, so that the homage which they render to some of the facts which Genesis relates is an indirect confirmation of the truth of the other facts which rest solely upon his authority. For it is well to remark that, according as our knowledge of the ancient Orient advances, a portion of the objections of our adversaries disappears forever, like those clouds which the sun dispels when it begins to shine in all the fullness of its splendor.

I. ABRAHAM.—*His Victory Over Chodorlahomor*.—In support of the above we have a striking example in the episode of Chodorlahomor, King of Elam. Here the history of Abraham leaves, so to say, its special frame to enter into that of general history of Asia; that which it relates is not a simple episode of the biography of the holy patriarch, but an important fact which connects this biography with the principal events and wars of this epoch, so that the sacred account can be checked off and cleared up by extra-biblical sources. And we see thereby how God Himself justifies His word; He brings to light, from the bosom of Chaldea, old bricks covered with cuneiform characters, which attest the correctness of Genesis. Until lately the facts having reference to Abraham were those by which the mythologists expected to achieve the greatest triumph. In 1854 a learned German, Grotefend, discovered in the four kings defeated by Abraham the four seasons of the year, and in the five kings of Pentapolis the five complementary days of the Babylonian year. All these fancies have disappeared in the light of history. Never has there been a historical account more precise and more circumstantial; we might say that it is a page contemporaneous with the event itself. The time, the places, the personages are named; nothing is wanting, as several Rationalists themselves have acknowledged. The principal facts of general history of the East which Genesis supposes are: The domination of King Chodorlahomor, King of Elam, over the lower plain of the Euphrates and Tigris; the extension of his power to the shores of the Mediterranean Sea; his suzerainty over the

kings of the land of Chanaan, and in particular of the neighborhood of the Dead Sea. The three kings who march with Chodorlahomor against Palestine are named, as well as their three kingdoms: Amraphel, King of Sennaar; Arioch, King of Ellassar; Thargal, King of Guti (Goïm). The date of their campaign against Bara, King of Sodom, and his allies is given; it is of the fourteenth year of the reign of Chodorlahomor. The march of their army is described with all the geographical details it contains. In spite of this precision of account the whole has been denied by the rationalistic criticism.

Nöldecke cannot believe that a personage like Abraham ever existed, because he is regarded as the father of several nomadic or settled peoples.—We cannot see how it follows from this that there has never been an Abraham, for these peoples must have had a first father, and why should he not be called Abraham? As to Nöldecke's sneer at Genesis for dating the campaign of Chodorlahomor from the fourteenth year of his reign, it is, to use his own expression, "strange." The narrator could date this war only in the manner that was customary in his time, not as it is done in our days. This is a characteristic trait of the ancient historian, for all the events of the Assyrians and Chaldeans are dated from the year of the reign of the kings under whom they took place, as is proven by the thousands of inscriptions and of contracts found in these countries. Hence we can affirm that all the inscriptions issuing from the country where Chodorlahomor reigned are in direct contradiction to Nöldecke.

"The names of two men mentioned in Genesis xiv.," says Reuss, "are positively names of localities. Mambre is the ancient name of Hebron, and Eschol is the name of a valley near by." Other similar arguments are so trifling that Nöldecke, who himself had held, in regard to the foregoing statement, the same opinion, could not help observing: "Certainly I am far from believing that I can put an end to all the unfortunate combinations to which this chapter (xiv.) has given occasion." Mr. Dillman says simply, in answer to all this reasoning: "Even if Mambre, Eschol, and Aner should be names of localities, as Nöldecke claims, this would be a fact without importance; for there is no difference in the result, whether it was Mambre or the scheik of Mambre that was the auxiliary of Abraham."

Nöldecke is correct in saying, however, that the campaign of Chodorlahomor had not exclusively Palestine for its object. The text

indicates this explicitly, because it shows us the confederate kings devastating the countries east and south of the Jordan; but whilst Bohlen concludes that we have to do here with a myth, because the expedition is made against the country of Chanaan alone, Nöldecke draws the same conclusion, because the kings of the shores of the Euphrates do not attack the valley of Sodom alone. "The whole campaign (east and south of the Jordan)," he says, "is very improbable; a certain sign that it is a fiction." What logic! This campaign is very improbable; therefore it is certain that it is a fiction!

Whence come the names of the kings and to whom must we apply them? Bohlen saw in Amraphel the King Sardanapalus, and in Arioch the King Arbaces. Nöldecke discovers in the first element of the name *Chodor-lahomor* the second element of the name *Nabu-chodor-osor* or *Nabuchodonosor*, and insinuates that it was after the model of the name of the latter king that the narrator manufactured that of the first. According to Hitzig, *Chodorlahomor* never existed; he is copied after *Sennacherib*, because both make their campaign in Palestine "the fourteenth year of their reign." Sorensen outbids them all; according to him, chapter xiv. of *Genesis* relates the campaign of *Antigonus* against the *Nabateans*, in the year 309 B. C.

There is what negative criticism asserts. Here is now what the authentic monuments tell in regard to these kings of the shores of the Euphrates, and of their improbable and impossible wars against the inhabitants of the shores of the Jordan and of the Dead Sea. In the first place, *Chodorlahomor*, King of Elam, is neither *Antigonus* nor *Sennacherib*, but a perfectly historical personage, a real prince of this name who reigned over Elam, and also over Chaldea, as *Genesis* assures us. Edward Meyer, one of the contemporary German historians, who pushes his opposition the furthest, and who even denies the existence of Abraham, is obliged to agree with *Genesis*. He says: "A king of the *Medic* dynasty is known to us through a singular chance; it is *Chodorlahomor*. . . . The name of *Chodorlahomor* or *Kudurlagamar* is perfectly Elamite; we know a goddess *Lagamar* at *Susa*. . . . It appears that the Jew who inserted chapter xiv. in the *Pentateuch* had procured at *Babylon* some exact accounts about the most ancient history of this country."

Arioch, King of *Ellassar*, is not less historical than *Chodorlahomor*. In fact his name has been found in the cuneiform inscrip-

tions under the form of Eri-aku—that is, servant of the god Moon, King of Larsam or Ellassar. “His son (the son of Kudurmabuk), . . . governs under him in Babylonia as King of Larsam (where he resided); he is the King of Sumir and of Accad,” Meyer avows. If the name of the son of Kudurmabuk really reads itself Eriaku, as has been suspected more than once, instead of Zikarsim, this prince, who calls himself *King of Larsam*, would be certainly identical with the one named in Genesis, *Eriók melek Ellassar*—that is, Arioch, King of Ellassar. Let us add that the reading Eri-aku is not a supposition. A German Assyriologist, Mr. Schrader, who wrote pages about the Bible, and in particular about the Pentateuch, entirely filled with rationalistic ideas, affirms positively: “Arioch, King of Illassar, is for me unquestionably identical with Eri-aku, . . . King of Larsav (Larsam). He was a son of Kudur-Mabuk, King of Ur and King of Sumir and of Accad. . . . As is shown by the name of his father Kudur-Mabuk, and that of his grandfather, Simti-Silhak, he belonged to the Elamito-Babylonian dynasty, that is, as we can conclude from the name, to the same dynasty as his confederate Chodorlahomor or Kudur-Lagamar.”

Two of the names mentioned by Genesis are thus proven to be historical through the native and original monuments. This is a first confirmation, as unexpected as it is positive, of the truth of the facts related by Moses. Behold a second proof. The account of the campaign of Chodorlahomor against the country of Chanaan, with his allied kings, supposes a great historical fact, namely that the kings of Elam had rendered themselves masters of Chaldaea and that their domination extended westward to the shores of the Mediterranean. The exactness of these accounts is established in the most explicit manner by the cuneiform documents, as Meyer agrees. He says: “About the year 2300 B. C., Babylonia was conquered by the kings of Elam. The king of Assyria, Assurbani-pal, relates in his account of the conquest of Susa, about 645 B. C., that 1635 years before, that is, about 2280 before our era, Kudurnanchundi, King of Elam, had pillaged the temples of the country of Akkad and had carried off the statue of the goddess Nanâ, from her temple of Éanna (at Urik). The result of these wars had been the establishment of a great Elamite empire, which comprised Babylonia. When Berosus related that the Medes had conquered Babylonia and had founded there the second dynasty of

eight Medic kings (which had reigned 224 years, or, according to another reading, 190), he certainly wished to speak of these Elamite sovereigns. Among the latter, we must count undoubtedly, as his name indicates, Kudurmabuk, son of Simtisitarchak. We read his name on the bricks found at Ur, with the title of conqueror or of sovereign (*adda*), a title whose meaning is not yet certain, of the land of the West (*mat Martu*) and of the land of Emuttal. Martu is Syria, at least in the more recent monuments of the Assyrian language; Emuttal is a district situated on the frontier of Babylonia and of Elam." (E. Meyer, *Geschichte des Alterthums*, Vol. I., p. 164-6.)

Thus the facts presupposed by the account of Genesis are of an incontestable authenticity. On all the points which we can verify, we surprise the Rationalists in the commission of error. It is not Genesis that is deceived or which has invented myths, but the pretended criticism.

2. *Abraham's Journey to Egypt*.—The twelfth chapter of Genesis relates that the famine caused Abraham to go down to Egypt. Nearly every detail of this account has been questioned by Rationalists.

Before entering Egypt Abraham, fearing that his wife's beauty might cause his death, advised her to say that she was his sister. This precaution has been used to calumniate the character of the patriarch, but it is of itself a proof that the episode is authentic and is not a myth. Moreover, it is true that Sara was a near relative of Abraham, as Genesis relates (xx. 12). In the Oriental languages the words brother and sister indicate, in a general sense, near relationship; therefore, if Abraham did not tell the whole truth, he at least did not tell a lie.

In Egypt Sara is taken by the Pharaoh, and Abraham, on her account, becomes the object of marked favors. The Pharaoh gave him numerous presents, among which were sheep, oxen, asses, and camels. All these facts have afforded rationalistic critics pretexts to attack the Bible, but all, however, are to-day verified by science.

First, the kings of the East always reserved the right to introduce into their harems all the unmarried women they pleased, and it is certain that the kings of Egypt had these secondary wives. Listen, for instance, to what an Egyptian papyrus relates: A workman had his ass taken away by an inspector; he reclaimed it,

and the case was taken before the Pharaoh, who, after an investigation, decided as follows: "He answers to nothing. . . . Let him make a report to us in writing . . . his wife and children shall belong to the king. . . . Thou shalt give them bread." Is this not a history analogous to that of Abraham?

Secondly, it is asked: How could a Semite like Abraham receive such a reception at the Pharaoh's court, and especially from a Chamite Pharaoh? Now, two Egyptian monuments have come to refute this objection and confirm the biblical account: (1) On an Egyptian tomb is found represented the arrival in Egypt of Amu-nomads (of Arabia or Palestine); their chief is called Abschah, a name analogous to that of Abraham; famine had driven them to Egypt, and they are received with solemnity by the governor. (2) A papyrus which has preserved to us the curious history of Sineh: Amu or Egyptian, who entered the service of the Pharaoh, and was raised to high dignities; he fled, remained in Palestine for a long time, then returned, reëntered into favor and became counselor of the king, with precedence over all the courtiers. We can see the coincidence of these two accounts with the biblical record.

But the chief points of attack are made on the presents which Abraham received. "Behold," says Bohlen, "how the author of this account goes astray: horses were very abundant in Egypt, and he does not name them among the animals given to Abraham; on the other hand, the author quotes sheep and camels, which were very rare in Egypt, and the asses, which were not tolerated. How can we admit as authentic an account so full of errors?"

This is really a bold statement, independent of its recklessness, for the details of the sacred historian are borne out by historical facts. *Sheep* were already represented on the monuments of the twelfth dynasty, and, among others, we see thereon an inscription where 2,208 of these animals are attributed to one proprietor. It is the same with *oxen*. The geological researches in the Delta have brought their bones to light from great depth, and, according to the inscriptions, they served the same purposes as they do at present. Besides, we know the worship of the Egyptians for the bull Apis, and the history of the golden calf. *Asses* are also represented in herds on the tombs of the Pyramids, where inscriptions attribute to such or such a proprietor as many as 760 of these animals. We find asses represented on a monument of the fifth dynasty.

The principal difficulty concerns the *camels*. They are not often represented on the monuments. But from this we cannot conclude on their absence or scarcity in Egypt. In fact: (1) Certain rules prevented the artists from representing divers animals, for instance, chickens and cats; a similar custom may have prevailed regarding camels. (2) It is certain that camels were in Egypt at the time of the Ptolemies, and nevertheless we do not see them on the monuments of that epoch. It might have been the same in the preceding centuries. (3) The Arabs employed camels from an early date, and surely their Egyptian neighbors must have known the use of these "ships of the desert." (4) Some texts clearly prove that the Egyptians employed camels at an early epoch; they taught them, these texts tell us, to dance. Samanasar (857 B. C.) quotes camels among the tribute paid by Egypt. (5) Finally, geological researches have unearthed bones of dromedaries in Egyptian soil, from a very great depth. All these testimonies are so categorical that Chabas, after having attacked the Bible in regard to this point, made a formal retraction.

As to the *horses*, whose omission Bohlen criticizes, this omission is easily accounted for. Horses were introduced into Egypt only at the time of the invasion of the Hyksos, and appear in the hieroglyphics only in the epoch of the eighteenth dynasty; now, the voyage of Abraham to Egypt is generally placed under the twelfth dynasty.

3. *The Catastrophe of Sodom and the Origin of the Dead Sea.*—It was in the time of Abraham that the catastrophe of Sodom took place. For a long time it was believed that this city, and the four other cities of the Pentapolis, had been submerged in the Dead Sea, and even that this sea dated only from that time. This is an error which it is important to point out, because the apologists of the eighteenth century adopted and maintained it against the author of the *Questions sur l'Encyclopedie* who was correct.

What caused the commentators to believe that the Dead Sea drew its origin from the catastrophe of Sodom is because Moses tells us that Chodorlahomor defeated the King of Sodom in the valley of Siddim, "which is the salt sea" or Dead Sea. From this they concluded that this sea did not yet exist in the time of the campaign of the confederate kings, but they interpreted the text wrongly; they supposed that the valley of Siddim formed the whole present bed

of the asphaltic lake. Now, this is not the case. This valley forms only a small part of the ground occupied to-day by the waters. The lake existed before, and it became enlarged in the time of Abraham by submerging the valley.

It is generally admitted to-day, in spite of some contradictions, that the Jordan never emptied into the Red Sea, as it was formerly believed. Be this as it may, the Dead Sea existed when Abraham arrived in Palestine. Genesis does not say that the guilty cities were submerged in this sea. It assures us, on the contrary, that they were consumed by a rain of fire and brimstone, and were thus destroyed; and the sacred writers inform us that the ruins of the cursed cities were visible, on the shores of the Asphaltic lake (Deut. xxix. 23; Is. xiii. 19; Jer. xlix. 18; l. 40; etc.). Where were they situated? We do not know, and opinions differ on this subject. To-day, most writers locate them on the south. Besides, this is of little importance. It is sufficient to remark that the southern extremity of the Dead Sea is not so deep as the central and northern parts, and that it is of more recent formation. Therefore, we can admit that it goes back to the epoch of the catastrophe.

4. *Lot's Wife*.—When the day came that fire from heaven was to destroy Sodom, the angels led Lot and his family away from the doomed city, giving them the following instructions: *Save thy life, look not back, neither stay thou in all the country about*. A rain of fire and brimstone fell; the wife of Lot, looking back, was, in punishment for her disobedience, immediately turned into a pillar of salt (Gen. xix.).

This history has furnished pretext for many attacks on the Bible. The author of *Wisdom* (x. 7) tells us that in his time the pillar of salt still existed: *A standing pillar of salt is a monument of an incredulous soul*. How could such an affirmation find favor with Rationalists? Writing about the Dead Sea, Volney, the author of *Ruins*, says: "We see here and there shapeless blocks, which the credulous take for mutilated statues, and which ignorant and superstitious pilgrims regard as a monument of Lot's wife; but it is not said that this woman was changed into a stone like Niobe, but into salt, which must have melted during the following winter."

Whatever Volney may say, we can, without exposing ourselves to the charge of either ignorance or superstition, regard as authentic the episode related in the Book of Genesis. In the first place, we

might claim as a miracle, either the death of Lot's wife or the preservation of her transformed body until the epoch when the author of Wisdom lived. But it is not necessary to suppose a miracle, properly speaking. In the neighborhood surrounding the Dead Sea the atmosphere is saturated with salt, and this salt impregnates everything into which it can enter. The transformation of Lot's wife into a statue must, therefore, be understood probably as a sort of saline petrification. It is not astonishing that such a statue should exist for a long time. "We came across," says Vigouroux, "near the Dead Sea, masses of crystallized salt, having a height of from 40 to 50 feet, by 100 feet wide at the base; among these blocks there is one which local tradition considers as the statue of which Genesis and the Book of Wisdom speak." Mr. Lynch admits this tradition. Without considering it as absolutely inadmissible, let us state that we do not need to have recourse to it to justify the biblical text. If this pillar should no longer exist, it would not follow that it had already disappeared at the time when the author of Wisdom lived.

II. THE PATRIARCH JACOB.—There are two qualities which are equally appreciated by Orientals: force and cunning. He is not the less admired who triumphs over his enemies by the subtlety of his mind than he who obtains the victory by the strength of his arm; and he who, being weak, triumphs through stratagem over the stronger is praised not less than the brave man who has overcome his antagonist by courage. Among the nomadic people, divided into small tribes, and often badly governed, where war is perpetual, and where murder and violence reign supreme, the smaller tribes, which are the most numerous, applaud rapturously the fox who gains the victory over the lion; it is the revenge of the oppressed against the oppressor. We find this sentiment among all nations of antiquity. Jacob is, as it were, the type of Oriental cunning. Weaker than Esau, his brother, or Laban, his uncle, he triumphs over both by knowing how to bide his time, by watching his opportunity, and when it does come by knowing how to take advantage of it. The means which he employed to obtain his end were not always irreproachable; but when we judge his conduct we must not lose sight of the fact that he made use of the artifices employed by those among whom he lived. Moses reports the whole without impartiality; and making known to us the details of wisdom and virtue, he has not concealed the faults. While everything cannot be praised in the

son of Isaac, the good, however, greatly outweighs the evil. Moreover, critics the least disposed to indulgence, like Stanley (*Lectures on the History of the Jewish Church*, 7th edition, pp. 45-6), after having judged Jacob severely, could not refrain from doing him justice in the end.

1. *Jacob Buys Esau's Birthright*.—The first reproach made to Jacob is for having taken advantage of Esau, in a manner not at all praiseworthy, but even unjust, in order to obtain from him his birthright. Esau, who could not withstand the cravings of his gluttonous appetite, when tempted by Jacob with a mess of pottage, exchanged his first birthright for this paltry pleasure, thus selling his right of inheritance (Gen. xxv.). We are under no obligation to defend Jacob in this circumstance of his life, for he was not impeccable; and Holy Scripture, in relating the fact with impartiality, does not approve the faults of the patriarchs and of the saints of the Old Testament, because it reports them. The sacred historians are narrators, not judges. They do not directly praise the worthy actions, neither do they blame the unworthy actions; they limit themselves to a mere relation of the facts as they occurred, without commenting on them, either as good or as bad. This must be borne in mind, for a correct appreciation of the Sacred Books. "Generally," says St. Augustine, "the Scriptures neither approve nor disapprove; they leave it to us to criticize and to judge, by reconciling the justice of God's law."

Besides, in the present case, the conduct of Jacob has not the gravity attributed to it. He had some reason to claim the first birthright, because Esau was his twin brother, and, moreover, we must remark that he did not deprive his brother of his earthly possessions, coming from the paternal heritage. Esau received from his father, Isaac, an equal share with Jacob, *the dew of heaven and the fat of the earth* (Gen. xxvii. 39), that is, the riches of this world; what Jacob particularly desired in his barter was only the spiritual blessing. Also when Jacob, on his return from Mesopotamia, desires to make presents to his brother, Esau refuses to accept of his generosity, stating that he was rich enough himself, and we do not see that there was any dispute between the sons of Isaac on the death of their father as to the subject of inheritance (Gen. xxxv. 9-29).

2. *The Blessing of Isaac*.—What is more blameworthy in the life of Jacob is the means he employed to obtain surreptitiously the

blessing of Isaac. Listen to what Du Clot has to say on this subject: "Jacob, by the advice of his mother, deceives Isaac through a lie, in order to obtain the blessing intended for Esau. This was a fault on the part of both. We are not obliged to justify all the actions of the patriarchs, because the sacred writers who report them do not approve of them. Neither is it necessary to assert that these actions were types, figures, mysteries, which announced future events. This would not be sufficient to excuse them; as also, on the other hand, faulty and reprehensible actions in themselves, after having been committed and without having ever been approved, could become figures of other future events. These faulty actions of the patriarchs were not committed in order to figure other events; but, after they had taken place against the will of God, who always condemns what is wrong, they might become figures of future events.

"According to these principles we can understand that God, who had announced His designs regarding the two children of Isaac and Rebecca, did not wish to derogate from them to punish two guilty ones. Isaac himself, after having learned of the lie of Jacob, did not revoke his blessing; he confirmed it, 'because he remembers' the promise which God had made to Rebecca. He says to Esau: *Thy brother has received the blessing which I had destined for thee; I have blessed him, and he shall be blessed, and thou shalt be subject to him* (Gen. xxvii. 33, etc.). When Jacob departed for Mesopotamia, Isaac renewed to him the blessing and the promises made to Abraham (xxxviii. 4). We must not conclude from this, as infidels do, that God rewarded the deceit of Jacob; there is no question here of a 'reward,' but of the execution of a promise which God had made before Jacob was born. Also, Jacob was punished for his lie, through the fear with which, for a long time, the threats of Esau inspired him, and through the exile which he was obliged to undergo." (Du Clot, *La Sainte Bible Vengé*, Vol. II., pp. 234-6.)

3. *Cause of Jacob's Voyage.* — According to Rationalists we have in the present text of Genesis a flagrant contradiction in regard to the motives which determined Jacob to go into Mesopotamia. It is, according to one narrator, in order to flee from the wrath of Esau, whom he had supplanted by obtaining the paternal blessing, that Jacob made the journey; according to another, on the contrary, it

is to marry a woman of his family, and not a Chanaanite (Gen. xxvii. 41-46; xxviii. 1, 2).

Rationalists have often made similar objections against different parts of the Pentateuch and against other sacred books; but with how little foundation may be easily seen. Might not more than one motive influence an action? Victor Hugo, in the preface of *Le Roi s'amuse* and in that of *Lucrèce Borgia*, gives two different explanations of the first of these pieces. Does it follow from this that the two explanations are not from the same author and that both cannot be true? So also in Genesis, the truth is that Jacob went to Mesopotamia from a double motive: The first to escape from the wrath of his brother Esau; the second in order to take a wife from his own kindred.

4. *Jacob's Sheep and the Manner in Which He Obtained Them.*—Genesis (xxx. 25-43; cf. xxxi. 7-12, 41) relates that Jacob, while he watched the flocks of Laban, his uncle, obtained lambs of any color he wished, by throwing green rods of poplar, of almond, and of plane-trees in the water-troughs where the sheep came to drink at the time they were about to breed. This episode is related in a very obscure manner in the Sacred Text. St. Jerome, the translator of our Vulgate, has justly remarked this. Commentators are not agreed as to the meaning of the different parts of this narrative. The following interpretation appears to be the most plausible:—

Jacob, after having served Laban during fourteen years, without receiving any other reward than Lia and Rachel, and after having been deceived in his first marriage by his uncle, wishes now to leave him and raise flocks on his own account. As God, because of the upright character of Jacob, had blessed Laban, this greedy and avaricious man tries to retain him. Yielding to the entreaties of his uncle, the son of Isaac consents to remain, but under the condition that he will be paid for his labors. His demand is too just to allow of its rejection; only, if we may employ the familiar and expressive figure, both play a fine game, and it is the son-in-law who beats the father-in-law.

In the Orient the most of the sheep are white; the goats are generally black. The white fleece is highly esteemed, because it can be used without preparation, and can be more easily dyed; the skins of the black goats have a higher value, because they serve as covers for tents. Experience had taught the shepherd that, in order to obtain

white lambs, a process of natural selection of the rams and the white sheep was necessary. In the bargain he made with Laban, Jacob asks for his payment the speckled sheep and the white goats; namely, a small number, which Laban already had, and the others which would be the result of breeding. The proposition is accepted, but as the brother of Rebecca is afraid that his nephew, when he has charge of the entire flock, might multiply the speckled lambs and the white goats, he leaves to him only the white sheep and the black goats, and intrusts the others to his own children. Thus he believed that Jacob would not have any profit; but he was very much deceived.

The spouse of Lia and Rachel obtains spotted lambs, thanks to the protection of God (Gen. xxxi. 9) and his own industry (xxxii. 37-41). We learn by the sequel of the narrative of Genesis (xxxii. 7, 8) that Laban, seeing himself deceived in his hopes, changed ten times, that is, often, the agreements which he had made, asking for the speckled lambs when they were numerous, and the white lambs when they multiplied more than the others.

Such are the main facts of the narrative. In whatever manner the different details may be understood, according to the interpretation rendered, the difficulty remains always the same. Does Jacob obtain through a miracle, or in a natural manner, the lambs of one or different colors? Voltaire and, after him, the majority of Rationalists would see in the means employed by Jacob only a recipe of no value, which produces no result. According to these critics, the proceedings of Jacob are ridiculous. "If it were sufficient," they say, "to place colors before the eyes of the females to have young ones of the same color, all the cows would produce green calves; and all the lambs, whose mothers eat green grass, would be green also. All the women who would have seen rose bushes would have offspring of a roseate hue."

These are pure fancies, without any serious foundation. If Jacob obtained through a miracle the lambs he desired, then all these assertions are false; if, on the other hand, the proceeding he employed was naturally efficacious, the red or white color of calves will not prove the contrary. In fact, the solution of the question is doubtful. Jacob expressly attributes to divine protection the success of the means he employed; but the text does not state formally that there had been a miracle, and it seems to present to us the use

of peeled rods in the water-troughs as a natural secret, which produced its effect without a special prodigy. Opinions may differ, therefore, in regard to what really occurred. The Greek Fathers generally admitted the miracle. "It was not according to the laws of nature," says St. Chrysostom (Hom. lvii. 2 in Genesis), "but wonderful and supernatural." On the contrary, the most of the Latin Fathers quoted the testimony of profane authors, who attributed to the action exercised on the imagination of the mothers the color of their breed, so that the phenomenon produced would be conformable to the laws of nature. Such is the opinion of St. Jerome and of St. Augustine.

5. *The Mandrakes of Ruben*.—Genesis relates that one day the eldest son of Jacob, Ruben, being yet a child, found in the fields of Mesopotamia *dudaim*, and brought them to his mother, Lia. Rachel, having seen these *dudaim*, wished for some and obtained them through her sister (xxx. 14-15). These *dudaim*, Reuss tells us, are the "fruits of the vernal mandrake, to which antiquity attributed a prolific power. Rachel desires to eat them in order to have children." So, say infidels, we find already in the first book of Moses belief in the virtues superstitiously attributed to this plant.

It is generally believed that the *dudaim* are the mandrake (Gen. xxx. 14-16), and they explain the Hebrew word as signifying "love-plant." The Arabs call them *toffah el-djin*, or "apples of the devil." There exists in no other Semitic language, except in Hebrew, a plant called *dudaim*.

The mandrake belongs to the family of the solanaceæ, and approaches the belladonna. It has a long fusiform and thick root, sometimes divided into two forked roots, which caused it frequently to be compared to a man, or a woman. Pythagoras called it, they say, anthropomorphous, and Columella qualified it as *half-man*. They even distinguished a male mandrake and a female mandrake. Its leaves, at the beginning of spring, are much like those of lettuce. Its purple blossoms, by their form, resemble those of the potato. The fruit, when it is ripe, towards the middle of May, has the size of an ordinary prune, and a dark yellow orange color. It is hidden among the leaves like a bird's egg in its nest. Its flesh is sweetish and its odor is somewhat disagreeable, although that of the plant itself is fetid. The Arabs believe that the mandrakes excite the senses until to madness, whence they call them "apples of the devil."

According to Hesychius, they gave to Venus the surname *Mandragoritis*, and the fruits of the mandrake they called "love apples." Plato, in his *Republic*, speaks of the liquor which they draw therefrom as an intoxicating drink. Dioscorides identifies the mandrake with the *kirkaia* or Circean plant, because it was believed that the famous enchantress (Circe) effected her enchantments with the aid of this wonderful plant. They made use of the mandrake to compound philters. Josephus speaks of it under the name of *baaras* as of a magical herb, endowed with the power to drive away the devil. It enjoyed great fame among the sorcerers of the Middle Ages, and they attributed to it all kinds of superstitious powers. Shakespeare in his dramas repeatedly alludes to the properties attributed to it. In the last century, quack doctors and venders of extraordinary remedies still sold images of the mandrake, which the credulous country folk considered possessed of magic properties.

The *dudaim* are named only twice in the Bible, namely in the episode of Genesis and in the Canticle of Canticles (Gen. xxx. 14-16; Cant. viii. 13). Ancient translators rendered this word as mandrake, but modern commentators are far from agreeing that this interpretation is correct. Rosenmüller maintains that the *dudaim* are a kind of small melon, called among the Persians *distembujeh*. The Persian version of the Bible so rendered the *dudaim* of Genesis. It grows in Syria and in Egypt as well as in Persia; it is very odorous and juicy, and the women of the harem delight to hold it in their hands, like the lemon, on account of its agreeable perfume.

However, we admit, because this opinion appears the most probable, that the *dudaim* are the mandrakes. But, in accepting this interpretation, we have to remark that the properties attributed to them, with the exception of their exciting and narcotic qualities, are purely fabulous. Naturalists and travelers are agreed as to the peculiar odor which the plant emits, fetid according to some, agreeable according to others. But all serious observers acknowledge that it has not at all the power which popular credulity attributes to it. All that is admitted is that it has a stimulating and soporific power.

Besides, whatever the properties of the mandrake may be, one fact is certain, namely, that the Scripture does not attribute to it any property. If a legend has been based on the episode of Rachel, the Scripture is not responsible for it. It is sufficient to read the

sacred narrative to become convinced that it is only through the most arbitrary and most false interpretation that any special power is attributed to this plant in the words of Moses. St. Augustine, who had studied the plant through curiosity, on account of the mention made of it by Genesis, correctly stated that the text does not suppose any peculiar property in the mandrakes, but tells simply that Rachel desired them. Why did she desire them? We do not know. Moses does not even state that Rachel ate the fruit. The *dudaim* might have been a simple bouquet of mandrake flowers, whose beauty charmed the sister of Lia. *Omnes flores amabiles*, says a commentator on this subject. It is believed that the Hebrew word signifies "love," and perhaps to this etymology have they attached the singular ideas which had become current regarding the virtues of this plant. Since the Greeks considered it also as an aphrodisiac herb, undoubtedly on account of the human resemblance they attributed to it, it is probable that after the conversion of pagans to Christianity there was a sort of blending of Greek belief with biblical history, whence resulted that fantastic transformation of the episode of Genesis. However, some otherwise very excellent commentators have adopted this latter opinion, but they have made Genesis say something which it does not say.

III. THE PATRIARCH JOSEPH.—The history of Joseph is related in detail in the Book of Genesis. The subject which Moses treats therein often makes him give minute descriptions of Egyptian customs. Now, as these customs are known to us to-day through the monuments discovered, and through the deciphering of the hieroglyphics, we can verify with perfect ease all the assertions of the sacred author, and note whether they are conformable to science and history. This labor has been done mostly, not by friends of the Bible, but, on the contrary, by persons who wished to discover what would prove inaccuracies of the Bible, and to show, if at all possible, that Moses was not the author of the narrative. The result of these inquiries has been the absolute confirmation of the biblical account even in the smallest details. In order to be so accurate it is not enough that the author should have passed through Egypt, but he must have lived there for a long time, and even at the court, and he must have witnessed the practical workings of the methods of administration. Now, such precisely are the conditions which we see fulfilled by Moses, to whom we attribute this account. We

do not need to prove in detail the accuracy of the biblical text, which to-day is admitted by all; we content ourselves with authenticating certain particulars which have been most often the subject of dispute.

First Objection: Putiphar, Eunuch of the Pharaoh.—Putiphar, master of Joseph, is called the “*eunuch of Pharaoh*” (Gen. xxxix.). Now, some Rationalists deny the existence of eunuchs in Egypt. The Bible, however, is correct. As we meet with eunuchs everywhere in the East, from the remotest antiquity, why should there not have been any in Egypt? It is true that monogamy was the general rule there; but the Pharaohs often had several wives, the one queen, the others simply favorites, and, consequently, the presence of eunuchs as keepers of the royal harem is not improbable. But there is more evidence on this point: the Egyptian monuments depict eunuchs, recognizable by the absence of the beard, the development of the chest, the obesity, and peculiar color of skin. They accompany the women, play on musical instruments, and occupy themselves with domestic labors.

But, they say, Putiphar, to whom this title is given, was a married man. To this we reply, first: Ancient writings, for example, the *Romance of the Two Brothers*, make mention of married eunuchs, and to-day we still meet with such who possess harems. Second: Titles of dignity must not always be taken in their etymological sense; let us quote, for instance, the French “*Chevaliers*,” which literally means hostlers, but who, in fact, are knights and, as a rule, hold high positions at royal courts. In Chaldea all the court officers were called “eunuchs,” and it may be that the Hebrews, originally of this country, had given this name to the dignitaries of the Egyptian court.

Second Objection: The Collar Given to Joseph by the Pharaoh.—When Joseph became minister of the Pharaoh, the latter, among other insignia of his power, gave him a golden collar (Gen. xli. 42). “It is hardly necessary,” says a Rationalist, “to say that precious stones belong to a later epoch.” Hence, he concludes that this history is not authentic. Now, the monuments give testimony absolutely contrary to this assertion. Not only do they represent the gods and kings as adorned with collars; not only does the stela in the Louvre at Paris show a Pharaoh investing his favorite with a collar, but we are in possession of collars and other Egyptian jewelry of a very remote antiquity, the workmanship of which is not inferior in any

respect to the ornamented jewelry of our time; and yet the mention of these things in the story of Joseph, Rationalists assert, is a proof that it is not truthful.

Third Objection: Divination by the Cup.—Hated by his brethren and sold into slavery by them, Joseph wishes to know their sentiments in regard to Benjamin, and hardly had his brethren departed when he pursued them as thieves, having first caused a valuable cup to be secreted in their possession. The cup is recovered where his steward had placed it, and he cries out: *The cup which you have stolen is that in which my lord drinketh, and in which he is wont to divine* (Gen. xliv. 5). As they did not discover until lately anywhere else divination by means of a cup, Rationalists profited by this to accuse Genesis of error and superstition, and certain Catholic writers believed it best to suppose, in this passage, an alteration of the text. According to Aurivillius it would be necessary, in order to admit that Genesis made such a statement, to prove that the Egyptians employed, at the time of Joseph, or later on, this mode of divination. The proof desired by Aurivillius has been obtained. The custom of divination by the cup exists in Egypt even to the present day. Mr. Norden relates that, in his voyage to Egypt, a certain Baram received him very courteously and said to him: "I have consulted my cup and found therein that you are of those whom our prophet has said would come from the disguised Franks," etc. It is, therefore, very probable that the use of the divination cup was not entirely unknown in ancient Egypt, and besides we find the use thereof in other countries, as, for instance, in Persia and Thibet.

But the words of the steward give rise to another difficulty: Can we not conclude from them that Joseph was addicted to magic? Certainly not. The overseer may have mentioned this particular on his own authority, being of the opinion, as were other Egyptians, that Joseph owed his great knowledge to magic. But even supposing that the steward spoke thus in the name of Joseph, we could say, with St. Thomas, that Joseph could speak on this occasion according to the common superstition which prevailed in Egypt, without admitting his own belief in it.

Fourth Objection: Possession of the Egyptian Soil.—In exchange for the grain which he distributed among the Egyptians, Joseph made the people give him their silver, then their cattle, and finally

their lands. Thus, the Pharaoh became proprietor of the whole soil in Egypt, except the domains of the priests, who, supported at the expense of the king, did not need to buy grain. This important act of the administration of Joseph has been attacked by unbelievers, who have contested both its reality and morality.

In contesting the reality of the fact one of them says: "It is a wonderful story, which could have been hatched out only by the imagination of an Ephramite. . . . The Egyptians in all historic times were the proprietors of their goods." The assertion of Genesis is, nevertheless, correct; everything goes to prove this: (1) The importance of the fact is such that a writer would not have dared to invent it, for fear of being contradicted by all the evidence which existed on the subject. "One does not trifle thus," says Eichthal, "with the history of a great people, alongside of it and under its eyes, so to say." (2) According to Diodorus of Sicily, the Egyptian soil was divided into three parts, and belonged to the king, to the priests, and to the soldiers (the privilege of the latter may have been introduced posterior to Joseph); hence, the mass of the people could not possess the soil, and, in fact, the monuments never designate single individuals as land proprietors. (3) Egyptology establishes the existence, under the Ancient and Middle Empire, of quite a turbulent feudal system, the proprietors of homes or hereditary principalities; under the New Empire, after the Hyksos, contemporaries of Joseph, we find no longer any trace of this system. May we not suppose that the legislation of Joseph had given the deathblow to this landed feudality? Thus we see Rameses III. speaking as the proprietor of Egypt: "I planted trees and shrubs all over the country, and I permitted the people to sit in their shadow." (4) Herodotus relates that Seostris (contemporary of Moses) divided the soil of Egypt into equal portions among all the inhabitants; now, this division presupposes an anterior condition of proprietorship, such as that which resulted from the measure taken by Joseph.

Joseph's action from a moral standpoint has been severely condemned. He is charged with tyranny. But: (1) The proprietary right of the Pharaoh remained a purely nominal one; the Egyptians continued to cultivate their lands, paying a tax of the fifth part of the revenue. In fact, the measure taken by Joseph was equivalent to an increase of the tax rates. (2) The Hyksos, or Shepherd Kings, who reigned at that time, were foreigners and conquerors; and there

is nothing astonishing in the fact that they displayed less consideration for the people than did the native kings, or that they profited by the circumstances to more firmly establish their dominion. To-day every citizen of an annexed province remains the master of his land; formerly only a few were usually allowed this privilege. (3) The proprietorship could never be established in Egypt as elsewhere; the fertility of the land depends there upon the measures taken to regulate the inundation of the Nile, and these measures could not be taken except by permission of the highest ruling power; hence, for public utility the lands were held in trust, as it were, by the State. (4) In the Orient, territorial proprietorship has never been considered and respected in the same manner as with us; nowhere do they look upon the products of the soil as belonging exclusively to the owner of the lands on which they grow; neither is the land so carefully cultivated, and consequently the soil is an object much less valued than it is in our countries. Thus, we see to-day the viceroy of Egypt buying from his subjects their lands, in order to obtain revenues. Mehemet-Ali did not take this trouble—he simply confiscated the land. Hence, when we consider Oriental customs and the peculiar proprietary conditions of Egypt, it will be seen that Joseph, on the whole, acted as a wise administrator, and we have to conclude with Ewald, a Rationalist, “that it is foolish to reproach Joseph for his conduct.”

From all these difficulties the conclusion can be easily drawn: If the most skillful scholars in the so-called enlightened nineteenth century have been so greatly deceived concerning the conditions, customs, and government of ancient Egypt, it would have been impossible for any one, except Moses, to give faithfully, several centuries after the facts, and in Palestine, an account so replete with details.

As to the objection which the Rationalists make against the very *existence of Joseph*, we regard this objection too stupid to be worthy of an answer. If Joseph never existed, if his history is eliminated from Genesis, how can we explain the sojourn of the Hebrews in Egypt, in a country where we find their traces even to the present day? How can we explain the singular privilege of the two sons of Joseph, who also received a share in the Promised Land, and became the fathers of two tribes? Indeed, to relate the history of Israel with Joseph left out would be as difficult and absurd as to

write a history of America without mention of Washington. We must conclude, therefore, that all the attacks of Rationalists avail nothing against the authenticity and veracity of the history of Joseph. Tradition, reason, and the testimony of scientific research all unanimously point to Moses as the author of this history, and also prove that no one but he could have written it.



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